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Green Building in the Community College:

A Study to Illuminate Student and Faculty Perspectives

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Green Building in the Community College:

A Study to Illuminate Student and Faculty Perspectives

by

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For my family.

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Green Building in the Community College:

A Study to Illuminate Student and Faculty Perspectives

Jason Robert Kovac, Ph.D.

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Green building has become a popular topic of debate and discussion among stakeholders in higher education. Public expectations for colleges and universities to invest in green building are on the rise. These expectations are fueled in large part by the growing awareness of the detrimental impact of traditional building practices among students and other stakeholders. Community college leaders find themselves on the cusp of a serendipitous convergence—evidence suggests that green building is becoming increasingly cost effective, and supports positive growth of student learning outputs on standardized tests. This research was designed to capitalize on the tremendous opportunity to probe the experiences of faculty and students in these new green facilities, towards a more robust understanding of how educators can maximize the effect of new and emerging building projects across the country. Using reflexive photography, photo elicitation, and qualitative interviews, compelling stories from teachers and learners were

collected and analyzed. Research synthesis includes recommendations for communication and organizational learning strategies, an argument for using green community colleges as a testing ground for innovation, and notes on the unique needs of faculty and students in a green community college.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

> The indescribable innocence and beneficence of Nature—of sun
> and wind and rain, or summer and winter—such health, such cheer,
> they afford forever!... Shall I not have intelligence with the earth?
> Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mold myself?
>
> —Thoreau, *Walden*

Nature means many things to many people. To some, it means a livelihood—to others, a sanctuary. Some marvel at the potential for the most innocuous of plants and animals to solve complex scientific mysteries, while others claim and defend the right of all species to progress through life unfettered. Ultimately, though a multitude of perspectives remain regarding the most appropriate relationship to cultivate with the environment, consensus has grown regarding the ecological influence that the human race exerts on the planet Earth. Some of the most compelling voices of the 20th and 21st centuries have spoken out on contemporary environmental issues, reminding people to think about their place within greater planetary ecosystems. They include religious leaders, commenting on the spiritual aspects of environmental crises (Pope John Paul II, 1990; Waskow, 2004; Kaza, 2004); they include politicians seeking to raise awareness and appreciation for the impact an individual can have in addressing these issues (Gore, 2007; Kerry, 2007); they include contemporary economists who note the great potential to revive local and global markets through “green” entrepreneurship (Friedman, 2008).

Some simply seek to remind us that nature is an unstoppable force, and will persist whether the human race continues to be part of the equation, or not (Weisman, 2007).

Response has been considerable, though varies significantly among contexts, as driven by the mission, vision and values of the individual or group being studied. Community colleges across the United States, as driven by the mission of access and excellence (Roueche & Baker, 1987), have begun to engage with local and global environmental issues in a number of ways, ostensibly towards a more successful student body, community, and workforce. The community college has made considerable strides towards a focus on sustainability in policy and practice, as made manifest by new programs, new facilities, and other initiatives. But before community college stakeholders celebrate their burgeoning success in pursuit of a sustainable future, leaders would do well to pause and measure what has been accomplished, and what still needs to be done.

This introduction to research highlights historical context, case studies, trends, opportunities and challenges in realizing sustainable policy and practice in the community college. I will focus on green building, one major element among many involved in advancing sustainable practice in education, though arguably one of the more significant elements in the decision to “go green.” As will be discussed throughout this research, higher educators still experience significant roadblocks in pursuit of green building. Ultimately, there remains an important opportunity for research that may advance stakeholder understanding of how community college students and faculty

perceive their experience in green buildings, and how these experiences have affected their journey as teachers and learners.

Context of the Study

The environment is a growing concern on college campuses across the globe. Carbon footprints, recycling, energy conservation, climate commitments—these are rapidly becoming regular topics of conversation among education stakeholders. As one Washington Post reporter offered: “What was once a fringe interest, perhaps seemingly a fad, has become fully entrenched in academic life... affecting not just how students live but what they learn and, as graduates, how they will change workplaces and neighborhoods” (Kinzie, 2008). Perhaps most visible among sustainability initiatives on college campuses is the growing interest in *green building*, where facility construction and renovation seeks to match some definition of sustainable best practice.

It is probably little surprise that the growing emphasis on sustainability on campus comes at a time when the natural environment is playing a bigger part in public dialogue. Stories of environmental catastrophes and natural resource shortages seem to appear daily in news media. Though debate regarding the extent and cause of such crises continues, increasing numbers of people are adopting the view that climate change and other ecological turmoil are substantially human in cause. Likewise, increasing numbers are starting to recognize the impact that construction and renovation of buildings has on these environmental issues. Citing a report delivered in 2007 by the United Nations-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), advocates for sustainable practice

describe “the role of human activity in increasing global warming. Since buildings are responsible for producing one-third or more of the world's greenhouse gases, the urgency of the report's findings—and the opportunity to reverse the damage—are greater than ever” (Wilson, 2008, ¶1).

There are many and varied claims regarding what city, what architect, and what client took part in the first “green building.” Scholars remind us that, in truth,

> ...the origins of sustainable residential designs... lie in ageless vernacular architecture, the kind of construction that was practiced for most of human history and continues to be practiced in what we in the West call the Third World. This approach relies on simple, renewable and naturally insulating materials (such as adobe) and passive strategies like siting, thick walls, and natural ventilation to keep houses cool in the summer and retain heat in the winter. Roughly one-third of the world’s population continues to live in such architecture (Stang & Hawthorne, 2005, p. 13).

Though these stories hint at the importance of green design for survival in some settings, contemporary motivation to engage with green building has become significantly more nuanced. Documented reasons why an individual or group may choose to build green are as diverse as the individuals and groups themselves; they include environmental consciousness (Jahrling, 2007; “Two New Buildings,” 2007; Moore, 2008), community

health (Hampton, 2007; “Honeywell,” 2007; Spriggs, 2007), cost savings (Wilson, 2005; Seibert, 2006; Sack-Min, 2007; White, 2006), aesthetics (Seibold-Bultmann, 2007), and many others, specific to certain context.

Scholars point to different events as the catalyst for the contemporary growth in interest in green building. Some point to the 1973 oil embargo (Singh, 2006), others to vague ecological and economic crises in the 1960s and 70s (Gissen, 2002). Many note the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) and the first Earth Day in 1970 as watershed moments in the move towards heightened public environmental consciousness. Given the diversity of reasons why groups and individuals choose to build green, the likelihood of finding consensus among scholars and advocates regarding the most influential historical events is slim. The result, however, is poignant—we live in an era where green buildings make headlines.

So much so, in fact, that the nonprofit sector has organized to offer third-party validation of green building claims. In 1998, The U.S. Green Building Council (USGCB) established the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification Program (USGBC, 2008). The LEED Program has grown rapidly, and while not universally loved, it is perhaps the most recognized benchmark for sustainable building standards in the United States (Wilson, et al, 2008). In their own words, “LEED is a third-party certification program and the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings” (USGBC, 2008, ¶2). A peer organization added: “The LEED rating system offers four certification levels for

new construction—Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum—that correspond to the number of credits accrued in five green design categories: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources and indoor environmental quality" (Natural Resource Defense Council, 2008, ¶4). Though discussion about flaws in LEED systems is ongoing, reports indicate that this benchmark seems likely to remain strong: "The IPCC report confirms the value of existing initiatives including the LEED green building rating system" (Wilson, 2007, ¶1).

The green building movement has evolved rapidly, relative to other initiatives in the broader history of higher education. What started as a student-led movement has quickly attracted the attention of the nonprofit sector, philanthropists, and education stakeholders on all levels. Environmental advocates would say that this attention comes not a minute too soon—as will be discussed in the next chapter, there is no shortage of statistics used by proponents to paint a bleak picture of what standard building practices do to the natural environment.

Statement of the Problem

The speed at which community colleges have responded to the call to build green is lauded by many. This speed, however, also contributes to an underdeveloped understanding of how green buildings affect the lives of students and teachers using these facilities. Emerging quantitative studies conducted in green schools have shown some positive increase in statistical measures such as air quality or student test scores. Though these studies contribute valuable information to be considered by decision-makers, these

quantitative measures have only so much explanatory power. Missing are the probing descriptions of challenges overcome and support structures relied upon; absent are the success stories that offer a more complete roadmap of how green buildings intersect with effective teaching and learning. If community college leaders are to help stakeholders realize the promise of green buildings, a more robust understanding of the experience of teaching, learning, and living in the green community college must be developed. With this need in mind, the following research questions served as drivers for this research:

Research Questions

This study will seek to answer the following primary research questions:

1. What expectations did students and teachers have before experiencing the green building? How has their actual experience compared to these expectations?
2. What is the experience of being a student or teacher in a green building like? What unique opportunities or challenges have emerged?
3. How does the green building represent a change from past experience as a teacher and/or learner? How have these changes been supported, and what could be done to better support future changes?

Overview of the Study

This study engaged a snowball sample of students and faculty at work in a community college where all facilities have been granted a LEED certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. The study leveraged qualitative methods, visual research methods, and interviews to collaboratively document and describe the experience of

teaching and learning in a green community college. Analysis examined illuminating, unique and/or unexpected cases of how students and faculty been affected by, and responded to, these new facilities. At the outset of this research, it was anticipated that these stories would serve to better prepare community college leaders considering green building projects on their own campus, towards a more productive application of green building principles. Additional description of methodology will be shared in Chapter Three.

Significance of the Study

> Like other buildings, schools are the products of social behavior. They should not be viewed merely as capsules in which education is located and teachers and pupils perform, but also as designed spaces that, in their materiality, project a system of values. In turn, the ways in which the buildings are used and experienced give them meaning *(Burke & Grovesnor, 2008, p. 8).*

Student success has been at the core of the community college agenda since the beginning of the movement (Gleazer, 1980). It remains so today. If environmental advocates are to successfully engage schools in green building initiatives, it would seem that the conversation about green building needs to refocus around student success. The conversation needs to complement facts and figures about emissions, water use, and cost savings with stories about what it means to teach and learn in the green environment. In

the next chapter, we will hear from environmentalists regarding the tremendous impact of buildings on the environment, and about how green buildings affect things like test scores and other student outputs. But education is not a black box—the process by which students achieve outcomes is arguably as important as student outputs themselves.

Albert Einstein was once asked the question, “Do you believe that absolutely everything can be expressed scientifically?” He responded: “Yes, it would be possible, but it would make no sense. It would be description without meaning, as if you described a Beethoven Symphony as a variation in wave pressure” (Clark, 2007). In order to advance our understanding of how green building affects teaching and learning in the community college, educators need to enrich their understanding of how green building influences teaching and learning, beyond a set of quantitative data points. Ultimately, we need to learn about the experiences of students and teachers in green building environments, so we might complement statistics with stories of success and struggle, and correct course as appropriate.

Green building reflects a tremendous change in how community colleges design the teaching and learning experience. We are still very much at the outset of this great journey towards a greener future on campus. No one person will have all the information needed to add depth and breadth to our understanding of how teaching and learning intersects with green building. Our best experts are those community college faculty and students who are teaching and learning in green buildings—and are thus familiar with the opportunities and challenges that arise in these unique spaces. The potential for

discovering unique stories that can advance our understanding of these issues is perhaps greater now than it will ever be.

Assumptions

In preparation for conducting research, it was necessary to make various assumptions about the topic of study. These include:

1. Community college students and faculty who are enrolled or employed at green community colleges experience opportunities and challenges that are specific to teaching and learning in a green building.
2. The students and faculty that participate in this study will be effective collaborators in documenting and describing their experience in green buildings.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Definition of Terms

Green building, also sometimes called sustainable or "high-performance" building, has sometimes suffered from an identity crisis—there is no one agreed-upon definition of the term that is applied across contexts (Moore, 2008). This challenge is compounded by emerging discussion about the legitimacy of green building as a stand-alone concept, as opposed to one element among many in the pursuit of sustainable practice. For the purposes of this paper, I will utilize a definition from the American Institute of Architects (2002):

> In its broadest context, sustainability refers to the ability of a society, ecosystem, or other system to continue functioning into the indefinite future without being forced into decline through exhaustion or overloading of the resources on which the system depends. Sustainable building design, then, defines a process that strives to preserve, protect, and improve the quality of the environment; protect human health; and achieve a prudent and rational use of natural resources (p. 489).

Throughout this research, I will use the term "green community college" to refer to a community college that has successfully completed one or more green building projects on campus. This is done for the sake of continuity and clarity, with every

appreciation for the fact that contemporary notions of what it means to be “green” go far beyond construction projects. This study is, in effect, an attempt to open the door to future qualitative and quantitative discussions about the green community college and the entire spectrum of sustainability issues encompassed by these ideas.

Advocates Speak

A substantial amount of the rhetoric coming from advocates of green building centers on the positive environmental impact that these projects can have—or what environmental consequences traditional building practice will incur. These citizens report that building construction "is one of the least sustainable activities currently underway on planet earth, accounting for 25 percent of deforestation and 40 percent of the total flow of raw materials into the human economy—some three billion tons of stuff per year" (AtKisson, 2000). Advocates for green building draw attention to figures from the U.S. Government and other research:

- According to U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) data, the operation of buildings accounts for 76 % of all power generated by power plants in America. (US EIA, 2007).
- The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has estimated that construction accounts for 60 percent of all materials used in the United States for purposes other than food and fuel (USGS, 1998).
- The U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure projects that, by the year 2050, almost 40% of the U.S. population will live in areas with water

shortages (U.S. House Committee, 2003).

- The United States' demand for energy is projected to outpace supply as soon as 2020. Emissions from the use of fossil fuels will increase by over 40% by 2010 (Valone, 2003).
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that approximately 136 million tons of building related [Construction & Demolition (C&D)] debris were generated in 1996—the majority from demolition (48 percent) and renovation (44 percent). New construction generated only 8 percent of building-related C&D debris (EPA, 2002).
- In 2005, the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE) reported that buildings accounted for 38% of greenhouse gas emissions, 52% of sulfur dioxide (SO2) emissions, 19% of nitrogen oxide (NOx), emissions, 40% of raw materials use, 30% of waste output (136 million tons annually), 12% of fresh water supplies, and 88% of potable water supplies (USDOE, 2005, pp. 18-22, 29–31, 134–136, 159–160).
- "Each day, [the United States] produces enough garbage to fill up 63,000 garbage trucks, which, lined up... would stretch from San Francisco to Los Angeles (about 400 miles)" (Harms, 1994, p. 93).

Each of these figures was discovered among scholarship arguing that the human race needs to make a more substantial investment in green building. They represent the concerted efforts of many concerned citizens who have collected data regarding the

impact humans have on the planet and its finite resources. These statistics are sometimes alarming, sometimes heartbreaking. They do, however, sometimes suffer from the assumption that readers will understand the implications of the science. Perhaps even more troubling, they often fail to respond to the particular interests of their diverse audience. Public concern about the environment takes many forms—in any given dialogue about environmentalism in the United States, one is likely to hear from preservationists seeking to protect land from any human interference, conservationists seeking to build responsible plans for use of the environment, lobbyists from the private sector seeking to maintain public image while growing business opportunities, individuals or groups who remind us of the significant sociocultural value that is inextricably linked to the natural environment, and innumerable other groups with their own perspectives to share. Any one-size-fits-all argument that seeks to build broad consensus with one set of statistics, with one story, no matter how compelling, is not likely to succeed.

Another troubling element of the green building argument that has been built to date is the fact that many advocates walk a dangerous tightrope between weaving cautionary tales and shaming their audience. Consider this argument from McDonough & Braungart (2002):

> All the ants on the planet, taken together, have a biomass greater than that of humans. Ants have been incredibly industrious for millions of years. Yet their productiveness

> nourishes plants, animals, and soil. Human industry has been in full swing for a little over a century, yet it has brought about a decline in almost every ecosystem on the planet. Nature doesn't have a design problem. People do (p. 16).

Language like this does not seem to be uncommon among environmental advocates—though it may be meant to motivate, there should be little wonder that it alienates some potential supporters in a position to champion things like green building on college campuses. As we will explore further, educators are continually growing their awareness about the benefits they might achieve through green building—environmental and otherwise. As educators and environmental advocates develop a shared understanding of mission and priorities, these discussions will likely grow to include ideas about student success, community engagement, and other considerations that are more central to the community college.

In Education, Buildings Matter

College facilities have long been discussed in light of their effect on the interactions of educators and students. Paulo Freire once wrote that, when designing a school, “attention should go into every detail of the school space: hygiene, wall furnishings, cleanliness of desks, the teacher's desk setup, educational materials, books, magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, encyclopedias... projectors, videos, fax, computers. By making clear that the educational space is valuable, the administration is able to

demand the due respect from learners" (1998, p. 97). Indeed, recent studies show just how significant an affect college facilities can have on student success: in a 2008 survey by APPA (an association of higher education facilities officers), 88 percent of students reported that "dirty facilities are an impediment to learning" and that "students said they preferred to learn in clean buildings and expressed a desire to be involved in helping to maintain campus facilities" ("Cleaner Schools," 2008, p. 11). Some scholars have drilled deeper, offering specific discussion regarding the impact of facilities design on special education (Abseon & Blacklow, 1971), workforce programs (Meckley, 1970), student affairs (Price, 2003), and libraries (Kirkorian, 1978).

Year after year, scholars report that college students identify *campus appearance* as one of the top factors that influenced their decision to enroll; results from the 2007 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, which gathered input from over 87,000 students, indicate that 51.8% of community college students consider campus appearance as an "important" or "very important" factor that influenced their decision to enroll in college (Noel-Levitz, 2007). These results unfortunately cannot predict the numbers of potential students that decided not to enroll per a bad reaction to campus facilities. From enrollment through graduation, college buildings play a role in student success.

In response to the increasingly visible discussion of green building and practice, scholars have begun to study how green building impacts student outputs (like performance on standardized tests), student outcomes (like understanding, engagement, and longer-term measures like professional success of graduates), and other school

success measures. Various studies report that green buildings have contributed to successes like radical improvement in test scores (Pelletier, 2006), reduction in teacher turnover (Kats, 2006), and increasing student health and attendance rates (USGBC, 2008b). More results will be shared in the section on student outcomes in green buildings, below. Suffice to say, advocates are enthused about what green building seems to be doing for teaching and learning.

Students, families, and the stakeholders that serve them have taken note. Expectations regarding the higher education sector's investment in green building and practice are on the rise. Public and private interests alike have begun to organize a bevy of publications, lists, and other resources that have helped publicize how green practice is being operationalized in college and university settings. In 2008, the Princeton Review announced that it will begin issuing "green ratings" to schools in upcoming editions of its college guides (Carlson, 2008). Later that year, Forbes magazine released a "Top 10 List" of green colleges and universities in the United States, noting that "schools are committing to reducing their carbon dioxide emissions, they're funneling endowment money into renewable-energy investment funds, and students—the engine behind much of this growth—are pushing for more" (Wingfield, 2008). The American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) now has signatories in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. As of June 2008, the 578 signatories represent over 25 percent of the total student population—over 4.6 million students—in the United States (ACUPCC, 2008). The Sustainable Endowment Institute (SEI) publishes an annual

“report card” that reports how American college and university endowments are advancing the cause of sustainability (SEI, 2008). The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) released *STARS 0.5* in April of 2008—this tracking, assessment and rating system enables colleges and universities with a standardized (though voluntary and self-reported) framework for gauging progress towards sustainability on their campuses (AASHE, 2008).

Student data would seem to justify these investments. In a 2008 study, researchers at The College of William and Mary surveyed 1,742 students nationwide regarding their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding climate change. Results indicate that not only are incoming classes of students concerned about the environment, but that interest is rising exponentially. Among the significant results:

- “Current freshmen are two times more likely to choose their school based on sustainability concerns than the entering freshman class just 3 years ago (13.5% vs. 6.5%, respectively). This suggests that we may be at the front of a new wave of students basing more of their decisions on 'campus greening' efforts” (Timmons Roberts, 2008, p. 2)
- “An overwhelming majority of respondents (85.5%) said that they would be willing to pay $20 a month more to live in an environmentally sustainable dormitory, apartment or house. Only fifteen percent said that they would oppose the extra cost or were unsure” (Timmons Roberts, 2008, p. 3).

Expectations for educators to build green are high, and seem to be rising. These

expectations act as a strong complement to the statistics shared by environmental advocates, above, as community colleges build momentum towards sustainability on campus. But significant barriers remain—ranging from cost, communication, and the challenge of facilitating change.

Barriers to Building Green

Given the growing expectations for schools to engage with green building, one might wonder why green building has not caught on more rapidly. Perhaps this is because, as Cathcart (2006) notes: "Green architecture seems to be a contradiction in terms. By definition, architecture is opposed to nature, because it is through architecture and urban design that we cope with our discomfort here on this earth, keep one another company, and together confront an otherwise inhospitable wilderness" (p. 278). One alternative explanation posits that, though "green building design claims increased occupant health, satisfaction, and worker productivity, [and while] these projects are increasingly lauded with awards," skeptics focus on the fact that "scant empirical evidence exists" to back up claims of progress (Zukowski, 2005, p. 8). Perhaps it is the simple fact that green building represents a significant change from what has become the "standard" way of doing things. It is worth revisiting the nuanced reasons that scholars cite as reasons why an individual or group may choose to build green, including environmental consciousness (Jahrling, 2007; "Ithaca," 2007; Moore, 2008), community health (Hampton, 2007; "Honeywell," 2007; Spriggs, 2007), cost savings (Wilson, 2005; Seibert, 2006; Sack-Min, 2007; White, 2006), and aesthetics (Seibold-Bultmann, 2007).

The green building movement is gaining momentum behind these varied drivers, though roadblocks remain.

In 2004, a study by Hanby illuminated major barriers to green building: interview participants indicated that chief among these barriers were lingering financial concerns, lack of exemplary models of process (and ongoing limitations on resources like time and expertise), and acceptance of LEED as the preferred criteria for validating a project as green (Hanby, 2004, pp. 65-71). Of these, perhaps the most persistent to present day are concerns about the cost of green building—Hanby's other barriers seem to have been mitigated by time and experience. As noted earlier, LEED has emerged as a current standard by which green building projects are evaluated—these measures have been revised many times to include emerging ideas regarding best practice and insights from scholars and practitioners alike (USGBC, 2008). In the years since Hanby's study, architects have advanced their emphasis on making timely decisions regarding green design elements, and are improving methods used to engage clients in productive discussions about project priorities (Hyde, et al, 2007). But educational stakeholders with some measure of budgetary control are still forthcoming with concerns about the cost-benefit of building green.

It is a concern that is not likely to diffuse quickly. In 2005, a privately-funded survey of 665 building owners, developers, architects, engineers, corporate owner-occupants, consultants, and educational institutions concluded that there is an emerging trend of green building in education; however, concerns still remain over the perceived

higher construction costs of building green (Turner, 2005). More recent studies have confirmed that green building does, more often than not, add cost to building initiatives. In a recent study of 30 green schools across the country,

> ...four of the green schools (in Georgia, Massachusetts and Oregon) cost no more than conventional design, while several schools cost substantially more. Six schools cost at least 3% more than conventional design while one—the Punahou School in Hawaii—costs 6.3% more. Typically green schools cost 1% to 2% more, with an average cost premium of 1.7%, or about $3 [per square foot] (Kats, 2006, p. 4).

For years, advocates for green building have tried to balance fears about increased project cost with projections about the cost savings that green schools might realize over time. Contemporary scholars now have several years of budget data to study from those schools that pioneered the green building movement in education, and conclude that these savings are real, and often considerable. Over a 20-year term, “the financial savings are about $70 per square foot, 20 times as high as the cost of going green... For an average conventional school, building green would save enough money to pay for an additional full-time teacher” (Kats, 2006, p. 2). A study of 8 Massachusetts green schools showed that “total benefits over 20 years averaged nearly eight times the incremental first costs,” supported in part by an average energy savings of over 30% (HMFH Architects, 2005, p.

2). The U.S. Green Building Council now reports that an average school with a green campus will save about $100,000 in direct costs annually (2008, p. 27). Edwards (1998) makes note of the great many ways green building can generate new business and revenue, citing cases of improved employee health and productivity, reduced turnover, enhanced organizational image, and enhanced regional resource bases that support operations. Slowly, but surely, results are emerging that may assuage fears about the high cost of building green.

However, as one roadblock wanes, others will undoubtedly emerge. For college leaders who make it past the hurdle of cost concerns, the next step should be to ask: *If we build it, will they come*? Bartlett & Chase (2004) offer similar apprehension about the unknowns specific to green building in academia. The authors wonder about the communication capabilities of colleges engaged in green building, and whether they are strong enough to tackle the immense challenge of sharing pertinent information with diverse stakeholders across disciplines and silos. Furthermore, green building represents a fundamentally different way of doing the community college's core business of teaching and learning—faculty, support services, staff and students alike will all have new challenges and opportunities to navigate in the green community college. Indeed, these unknowns anticipate some of the more compelling research opportunities related to green building in education, discussed further below. If college leaders are to successfully help green building become part of the culture of higher education, they would do well to pursue a more thorough understanding of how they can support faculty and students as

they adapt to the changes inherent in green building.

Case Studies: Green Building in Higher Education

There is perhaps no better way to ease apprehension and visualize solutions to new and unique problems than through review of those who have dealt with similar problems before. Schools that have pioneered the green building trend have now begun to share stories and promising practices with interested peer institutions. The promising practices they offer are, admittedly, particular to a certain context, but may help colleges at the outset of their journey avoid unfortunate mistakes. Stories that have emerged in print and online include:

- At Penn State (PA), Environmental Science Faculty Christopher Uhl notes that "[stakeholders] needed numbers, indicators and benchmarks to begin the awakening process. As is true of all social change movements, we also needed trigger events to heighten awareness about the problem and the opportunities" (2004, p. 47).
- The Massachusetts Energy Collaborative (MEC) highlights 48 K-12 schools that the organization has helped go green, describing initiatives that range from helping install photovoltaic and wind renewable energy systems to conducting feasibility studies for more intensive facilities changes (2008). The Collaborative plans to invest another $15 million in making Massachusetts schools greener in the short term, and has discovered that investing 1.5% to 2.5% of total project budgets "can provide benefits of up to 8 times the incremental cost over a 20-year

lifecycle period" (MEC, 2008).

- Jahiel & Harper (2004) describe a student-led effort at Illinois Wesleyan University (IL), citing a resolution drafted and approved by the student senate as the catalyst for a new wave of reflective environmentalism on campus. Task forces, new curriculum, and an administrative culture that was supportive of responsible student activism led to rich conversations and innovation on campus. Of note, these scholars note that significant cultural changes among administration involved in facilities decisions were of invaluable importance in building momentum behind green building efforts—changes that were supported by communication, visible commitment, and identifying burnout or resistance before they led to negative behavior.
- In describing the evolution of sustainability initiatives at Emory University (GA), Peggy Bartlett notes her frustration with the long, drawn-out process of building interest in all things green (2004). She emphasizes the importance of getting the right people involved when possible: "it was reassuring to [potential advocates] that a university senate president, distinguished faculty in law, public health, medicine, and theology, as well as several key facilities management leaders... were willing to be publicly supportive" (p. 76).
- Reflecting on early experiments in building green at Oberlin College (OH), David Orr (2004) emphasizes the importance of doing formative evaluation for any green building effort, which can do wonders to feed fundraising in support of

these sustainable initiatives. Orr also emphasizes the importance of adopting the principles of Senge's "learning organization" (2000), where leaders seek to build a stronger, shared understanding of how behaviors can influence outcomes in our complex systems—imperative for building shared vision behind any project, green building being no exception.

- Marymount College (CA) was able to combine several innovative initiatives in pursuit of a greener campus—students engaged in service learning projects at Marymount worked to preserve, restore, and transplant native plants as the College worked to upgrade facilities. Allen Franz (2004) reminds us to consider competing priorities and external technical constraints (mentioning, specifically, county fire control regulations, city codes, and regional permit conditions) when working towards green initiatives on campus.

This is, by no means, an exhaustive list of green projects underway in education. And yet the stories listed above betray an interesting trend—to date, stories of community colleges "going green" are less common (or at least less publicized) in national media or among national organizations. This is not to say that there are no community colleges pursuing green building. In 2007, St. Louis Community College (SLCC)(MO) opened a branch campus in Wildwood, Missouri; this building was the first campus in the state (and certainly one of the first in the country) that was entirely LEED-certified (SLCC, 2008). The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) received California's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award in 2007, the State's "most prestigious

environmental honor," for its green building programs (LACCD, 2007). Chandler-Gilbert Community College (CGCC)(AZ) has "pledged to construct all of its new facilities to U.S. Green Building Council (LEED) silver certification standards as part of the college's participation as a charter signatory to the President's Climate Commitment" (CGCC, 2008). CGCC's first LEED-certified building opened in the fall of 2008.

The green building movement in community colleges has begun. Pioneers like Chandler-Gilbert Community College and the Los Angeles Community College District are acting as stewards of the natural environment as a community resource. As additional case studies are shared, increasing numbers of community college leaders are likely to apply lessons learned about green building in their own facilities construction and renovation. What may have the most dramatic impact on the growth of the green building movement in the community college, however, is the emerging understanding of how green building impacts the core functions of teaching and learning. As will be discussed below, green buildings do more than work to protect the environment; they enhance the capacity for facilities to impact student success.

Student Outcomes in Green Buildings

It is truly amazing what a change of setting can do for student achievement. Consider these output measures, gathered by researchers engaged with green schools across the U.S.:

- "A 1999 study conducted by the Heschong Mahone Group for Pacific Gas and Electric demonstrates improved student performance in relation to day lighting.

> Test scores for more than twenty-one thousand students from three school districts, located in three different geographic regions, were analyzed in relation to the quality of classroom daylight. Students with ample ambient daylight progressed up to 26 percent faster on reading tests and 20 percent faster on math tests than students in classrooms with inadequate daylight" (Pelletier, 2006, pp. 271-272).

- A study of Chicago, IL and Washington, DC schools found that better school facilities can add 3 to 4 percentage points to a school's standardized test scores (Schneider, 2002)
- A recent study of the cost and benefits of green schools for Washington State estimated a 15% reduction in absenteeism and a 5% increase in student test scores (Paladino & Company, 2005).
- Research found that, in two school districts in Illinois, student attendance rose by 5% after incorporating indoor air quality improvements (Illinois Healthy Schools Campaign, 2003).

Other studies have described (in varying degrees of detail) improved student performance in greener learning environments, per the influence of factors such as lighting, acoustics, and air quality (Schopf, et al, 2007; Olson & Kellum, 2003; Nicklas & Bailey, 1996). Kats' 2006 synthesis of these studies offers:

> Based on actual improvements in design in green schools and based on a very substantial data set... a 3-5%

> improvement in learning ability and test scores in green schools appears reasonable and conservative. It makes sense that a school specifically designed to be healthy, and characterized by more day lighting, less toxic materials, improved ventilation and acoustics, better light quality and improved air quality would provide a better study and learning environment (p. 12).

These facts and figures represent a new kind of argument that advocates for green building might use to engage community college educators in sustainable facilities design. For whatever statistics college leaders have encountered about the fragile environment, for whatever average costs and savings they have read about, advocates can likely count on stakeholders on all levels to respond to discussions about student success. We have heard that the environmental concerns on campus have historically been voiced by students and some faculty; we can anticipate that the fiscal concerns about green building are likely to reside among administration, board members, and tax payers. Student success, however, is the glue that brings everyone together—for any college to make a significant investment in green building, implications for student success must be addressed. It is unlikely that any community college would invest in cost savings or environmental protection at the expense of student achievement—this would run contrary to the core mission of the institution. Fortunately, this does not seem to be a choice that we have to make—the numbers indicate a win-win situation.

And therein lies a unique opportunity to advance our understanding of the implications for building green in the community college. Neither spreadsheet nor set of statistics can paint a complete picture of challenges and opportunities that will be encountered when community colleges engage in green building. Instead, these lessons lie in the stories that might be told by the faculty and students who have experienced life on a green campus. Given the likelihood for growing numbers of community colleges to invest in green building in the near future, it seems prudent to gather these stories, so leaders might help other faculty and students make successful transitions into their own greener buildings.

Leading Change: Contemporary Perspectives

The relative success or failure of these transitions is undoubtedly influenced by how college leaders help faculty and students negotiate the shift into the green community college. Unfortunately for these leaders, there is no infallible or one-size-fits-all roadmap to follow when supporting stakeholders through periods of change. There are only lessons learned from previous attempts, the promising practices of peer institutions, and scholarship on organizational change. Roueche & Jones (2005) note that "higher education professionals as a whole have never been fond of change" (pp. x-xi), though they also remind us that those colleges that fail to change will be less prepared for turbulent times ahead.

There is considerable confluence of scholarship around factors that facilitate change. Garg & Singh (2006) make note of the potential in formally or informally

supporting the development of “change agents” to act on behalf of an organization. These scholars posit that a well-positioned, well-informed change agent can influence behavior, raise morale, and instill high organizational commitment. Beckhard & Harris (1987) and Duck (1993) advance the idea of “transition management teams,” built of members chosen for their wisdom, objectivity, influence, and access to resources; these teams can work to enable the communication and “emotional connections,” noted as essential ingredients for successful transformation. Across disciplines, fostering a willingness to share information is noted as a critical factor in helping an organization recognize when and why change is needed, and developing a holistic understanding of how the organization can respond (Stenzel, et al, 1997; Davenport & Prusak, 2000). Drucker (2001) compounds the emphasis on information sharing with the importance of honoring the past during periods of change: “the more an institution is organized to be a change leader, the more it will need to establish continuity internally and externally, the more it will need to balance rapid change and continuity... Balancing change and continuity requires continuous work on information” (p. 90-91).

Change scholars also place special emphasis on organizational learning as it relates to change. Kanter (1999) stresses the importance of experimentation, feedback loops, and skills development, as these can all lead to improved adaptability, feelings of empowerment, and ownership of change. This seems akin to suggestions from Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) and Morgan (2006), who advocate an organization that builds collaborative processes that continually challenge the “normal” way of doing things,

towards a constantly fresh and evolving product—effectively leading change, rather than constantly responding to it. Bumphus (2008) notes how professional development programs were key in positioning a state community college system when recovering from two natural disasters—Hurricanes Rita and Katrina—and helping stakeholders "recover, renew, and breathe new life into the devastated areas and respond to student needs" (p. 227). Unanticipated and forced change such as this may be the hardest to negotiate, and incorporating promising practices of the learning organization seems to have served this system well.

Perhaps most common among these discussions are the importance of leadership in facilitating change. "Leadership is the ability to influence, shape and embed values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors consistent with increased commitment to the unique mission of the community college" (Roueche, et al, 1989, p. 34). These characteristics seem fundamental to the process of explaining change, debunking the myths and mysteries associated with change, and motivating productivity towards change—it is the leaders who help an organization rally around a change goal (Argyris, 1976). Leadership in this sense is, by no means, limited to top executives—but is born of passionate individuals at every level of the organization, seeking transformation (Senge, 2008). Wherever its origin, leadership is the key factor in shaping organizational conversations, influencing a cultural willingness to move beyond the status quo, and aligning resources in support of the responsible risk-taking. Indeed, conversations about change in the community college have begun to be reframed as discussions about entrepreneurship, as

conversations about enabling creativity (Roueche & Jones, 2005; Roueche, et al, 2008). If we accept that change is a constant, it seems urgent that leaders work with stakeholders to embrace change as an opportunity—one that can lead to tremendous innovation.

Contrast these ideas to discussions regarding resistance to change, which seem to center around three main arguments—political, emotional, and logistical (Kavanagh, 1999). Political resistance to change is connected to the dynamics of power and status within an organization—where individuals experience a personal shift in power or status as a result of change, there is likely to be resistance. Giddens (1999) corroborates this idea, noting that change is at the root of fundamentalist behavior—individuals who have historically benefited from the power and status bestowed upon them by tradition are seeing that status wane in light of contemporary trends such as globalization. Response can be extremely (and quite often literally) destructive. Garg & Singh (2006) describe emotional resistance to change as related to personal fear of the unknown—a particularly compelling fear in light of bleak budget projections for higher education in the United States (ECS, 2000; Lasher, 2004), which, in turn, have led many college stakeholders to link change with concepts like outsourcing and downsizing. Logistical resistance to change is a more nuanced idea, and relates to the specifics of how change is accomplished in particular contexts (Kavanagh, 1999). In each of these cases, resistance to change would seem to be significantly amplified in situations where communication between organizational leadership and stakeholders affected by change are strained or nonexistent, as there would be limited or no opportunity to build mutual understanding of

pressing issues, to reconcile misunderstandings, or to challenge weak ideas.

If we contrast the factors that facilitate change with those that breed resistance, one might begin to hypothesize some differences between organizations where change is successful and where change remains a challenge. In organizations where leaders are proactive in building discussions about the organizational threats and opportunities, all participants are engaged in creating a solution, and change is owned by all. In organizations where leaders empower, collaborate, and leverage the considerable talent of their staff, creative solutions emerge that respond to the needs of greater numbers of stakeholders. It should be no surprise that these sentiments are at the very core of recent discussions about achieving change towards more sustainable organizations.

> A sustainable world [will] only be possible by thinking differently... Today's innovators are showing how to create a different future by learning how to see the larger systems of which they are a part and to foster collaboration across every imaginable boundary. These core capabilities—seeing systems, collaborating across boundaries, and creating versus problem solving—form the underpinnings, and ultimately the tools and methods, for this shift in thinking (Senge, 2008, p. 11).

As this study moves forward, I look forward to collaborating with research participants to reflect on the changes happening as their College moves towards a

sustainable future. Perceptions of leadership behavior will likely reveal great opportunities for other colleges pursuing green building projects in the future.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter details the methodology that was used to answer the research questions regarding community college student and faculty perceptions of their experience in green buildings. The influence of methodology on the outcome of any research study is unquestionable—researchers need to be meticulous in building a research framework that is best suited to addressing the questions at hand. Below, a rationale for the selected methodology will be presented, including notes on the use of qualitative and case study methods. A description of the use of visual methods in social sciences is included, with further description of reflexive photography and photo elicitation. The chapter continues with notes on data analysis procedures, exploratory study, and the timeline that was drafted for the project. Further below, notes on sampling, the ethics of visual research, and the context for this study are discussed.

Qualitative Research

Contemporary researchers working in the field of education have a number of options to consider when doing research design. The methodological opportunities within the quantitative and qualitative traditions are near innumerable, each with great potential for generating unique (and often decidedly exclusive) data for analysis. Herein lies a challenge to be reconciled by any researcher—a challenge that is complicated to some degree by the growing consensus that dissimilarities between quantitative and qualitative

methods are often oversimplified and exaggerated (Salomon, 1991; Howe, 1988), or by scholars who note the great potential in mixing methods (McNeill & Chapman, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2007). Ultimately, it seems that the philosophical orientation of the researcher, the purpose of research, and the type of knowledge to be produced through research will have the most significant impact on the research methods chosen (Merriam, 1998).

For this study, which seeks to explore the perceptions of community college students and faculty who are teaching and learning in green buildings, qualitative methods emerged as the more philosophically resonant, with great potential for producing rich knowledge that might advance the conversation about the physical environment and teaching and learning. This study's emphasis on the physical environment seemed akin to the concern for context in contemporary qualitative research: “qualitative researchers go to the particular setting under study because they are concerned with context... [they] assume that human behavior is significantly influenced by the setting in which it occurs” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, pp. 4-5). Likewise, qualitative methods are often tailored to elicit a more thorough understanding of the perspectives of research subjects, as is a priority in this research: “the phenomenonologist, or interpretivist... is committed to understanding social phenomenon from the actor's own perspective and examining how the world is experienced. The important reality is what people believe it to be” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 3). Qualitative researchers have produced considerable work in education environments, where scholars again note the potential for capturing unique

points of view: “qualitative researchers in education... set up strategies and procedures to enable them to consider experiences from the informants' perspectives. For some, the process of doing qualitative research can be characterized as a dialogue or interplay between researchers and their subjects” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 8). Perhaps most compelling among the reasons to choose a qualitative approach is the potential for unintended discoveries, and a deeper understanding of the complex factors that influence how students and faculty relate to the green community college. As Merriam (1998) noted, “in contrast to quantitative research, which takes apart a phenomenon to examine component parts... qualitative research can reveal how all the parts work together to form a whole. It is assumed that meaning is embedded in people's experiences” (p. 6).

Qualitative research in the education and social sciences in the United States has deep roots in American sociology and anthropology (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Scholars will often include Mead's early applications of anthropological research methods in education (1942; 1951) and mid-20th century work by the Chicago School (e.g. Park, et al, 1925; Wells, 1939) among histories of qualitative research in education environments. These pioneers urged scholars of education to move away from traditional, empirical research methods (Bruyn, 1966), towards a more holistic understanding of the subject of study.

This emphasis remains central to application of qualitative methods today, including studies where perceptions of a physical environment were of central concern. Klein (2007) used qualitative methods to explore how the physical environment

interacted with student perceptions of trust in Northeastern U.S. high schools, and noted: “qualitative methodologies enabled me to understand the students' perspectives on a personalized level... I did not go into each school seeking a common experience, but looked to uncover how individual students constructed meaning in the space of their schools” (p. 44). Epstein's (2007) study notes that qualitative techniques helped generate active conversations in her study of children with cancer and their perceptions of their physical environment, where the freedom from “right” and “wrong” answers were critical in building a robust understanding of participant experience. Other studies offered similar emphasis, noting how qualitative methods afforded the researcher the opportunity to focus on how participants construct meaning in education environments (Morrison, 2007; Edwards, 2006; Hellyer, 2005). This considerable precedent breeds confidence in the decision to move forward using qualitative methods.

Case Study Method

Jupp (2006) defines a case study as “an approach that uses in-depth investigation of one or more examples of a current social phenomenon, utilizing a variety of sources of data. A 'case' can be an individual person, an event, or a social activity, group, organization or institution” (p. 20). Merriam (1998) posits similar description, emphasizing the “intensive, holistic description of a single entity” (p. 34). Scholars note that the case study method is particularly appropriate when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are ambiguous or uncertain (Gray, 2004; Yin, 1994). This may be because the case study is considered a particularly flexible methodology (Hakim,

2000), or because of the explanatory power that results from an in-depth look at one particular phenomenon (Hays, 2003). This study seeks to capitalize on the great potential in using the case study method for exposing a broader audience to the new and unique stories that are emerging as students and teachers use green buildings.

The precedent for using the case study method in education is considerable. A brief review of recent research yields examples of the case study method used to consider subjects like language instruction (Al-Shammari, Z., et al, 2008), community partnerships (Zakocs, et al, 2008), and use of the library by minority students (Haras, et al, 2008). Likewise, case studies seem a popular choice for researchers investigating the perceptions of a select population in a particular environment (Fernando, 2007), including some that investigate education buildings and spaces (Klein, 2007; DeGregori, 2007).

The promising practices highlighted in these and other studies were invaluable guides while the roadmap for this research was being built. Recommendations therein supported the discovery of compelling stories from teachers and students at my chosen site location—St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. This site is described in further detail later in this chapter.

The case study method is not without its limitations. Though the focus on one institution may ultimately limit the generalizability of results (Jupp, 2006), it is hoped that the new and unique experiences reported by participants will help prepare educators for the needs of students and teachers in green buildings (Hays, 2003). Additionally, insight generated via a more intensive look at one institution will enable future

researchers with the background needed to further explore these ideas in broader contexts.

Visual Ethnography

Contemporary technologies have played a significant role in the evolution of qualitative research. They have advanced the means by which qualitative researchers can interact with their subjects. They have helped researchers identify new sources of data that can be used for analysis. These tools range from the electronic to analog, from high-tech to low-fidelity. Somewhere along this spectrum of technology, we find those tools that help researchers add a visual element to doing qualitative research, including photography.

The use of photography in qualitative research has a rich history, including (ongoing) debates regarding the potential and pitfalls in application of these methods. Conversations have focused on the potential for visual images to support social science research (Collier, 1967; Hockings, 1975), the need to move visual research beyond a scientific-realist paradigm (Edwards, 1992; Morphy & Banks, 1997), and the potential for photography to shift the way people understand and interpret reality (McQuire, 1998; Lury, 1998). Harper (2002) contributes a unique rationale for using visual methods in research:

> "The parts of the brain that process visual information are evolutionarily older than the parts that process verbal information. Thus images evoke deeper elements of human

> consciousness that do words; exchanges based on words alone utilize less of the brain's capacity than do exchanges in which the brain is processing images as well as words" (p. 13).

Scholars across disciplines and across the globe have engaged in ongoing dialogues about the meaning of visual materials and their place in social science research (Barthes, 1980; Piette, 1996; James, et al, 1997). Over time, popular opinion has shifted from the idea that photographs taken by social science researchers "are really only vacation pictures" (Becker, 1986, p. 244) to a more nuanced understanding of what these photographs can capture. As Canal (2004) notes:

> "Photography: (a) shows what the anthropologist/ photographer wants to show in its framing, (b) allows us to see what had not been intended to be shown but which appears in the image accidentally, (c) calls attention to those aspects which are invisible to the ordinary eye" (p. 25).

The result is clear—visual ethnography has become a staple of contemporary qualitative research; a critical mass of advocates and authors are gathering around these ideas, working to advance their potential for research in the 21st century (Pink, 2001; Pink, et al, 2004; Rose, 2001; Stanczak, 2007). These scholars demonstrate considerable balance in advocating for the use of visual methods in social science research: "while

images should not necessarily replace words as the dominant mode of research or representation, they should be regarded as an equally meaningful element of ethnography work" (Pink, 2001, pp. 4-5). This considerable body of scholarship will inform the two primary methods that I will use for data collection: reflexive photography and photo elicitation.

Data Collection, Step One: Reflexive Photography

This method, sometimes called "collaborative photography," refers to the practice of giving research participants cameras and asking them to take photographs in response to a particular prompt (Pink, 2001). The intention is to produce photographs that will be later analyzed by the researcher or in collaboration with research participants. Participant participation for this study is seen as crucial; as Banks (2001) notes: "all image production by social researchers in the field, indeed all first hand social research of any kind, must be collaborative to some extent [because] the researcher's very presence amongst a group of people is the result of a series of social negotiations" (p. 119). This method has been used in several studies as a means to discover more about the perceptions of research participants in a certain environment, including faculty and/or students in education settings (Rose, 2007; Van Den Elzen, 2006). As Canal (2004) notes: "When ethnographic photographs are a result of collaboration and dialogue between the anthropologist and her interlocutors, rather than simply reconstructing the past, photographs tell us a lot about how the people we are working with see/understand reality" (p. 36). As such, reflexive photography seems a particularly incisive means to

discover more about the perceptions of faculty and students regarding the green buildings they inhabit.

For this study, a sample of faculty and students were given cameras, and asked to use them to document their experience as teacher and/or learner in the green buildings on campus (sampling procedures detailed below). After participants had been selected, conversations were scheduled and conducted via phone to share instructions and answer any logistical questions. Care was taken to belay answering any questions that went beyond logistics, in order to reduce the potential for influencing participant contributions. Participants were given anywhere from four to eight weeks to complete reflexive photography, depending on needs reported during these early conversations.

Some researchers have found that asking participants to make notes or prepare journal entries can serve as a great complement to this step in the data collection process (Swartzentruber, 2008). These journals can reduce the possibility that participants may forget intentions or meanings ascribed to certain photographs between the time each photo is taken and later steps in data collection and analysis. For this study, each participant was asked to keep a journal, in which they would record thoughts relevant to their photographs for later reflection and discussion. After the agreed-upon length of time had passed, I asked participants to return cameras and journals to me via stamped envelope that had been provided to them. I then developed the participants' film, and prepared a schedule for the next step in the data collection process—photo elicitation interviews.

Data Collection, Step Two: Photo Elicitation Interviews

Reflexive photography, considered as a standalone mode for data collection, yields tremendous opportunity for semiotic analysis and discussion of meaning within participant-created photographs (Rose, 2001). There is also, however, great potential to advance data collection through an additional series of interviews, using these participant-created photographs as a touchstone for dialogue. This type of interview, sometimes called a "photo elicitation interview" or "photographic interview," helps turn photographs into "reference point[s] through which an informant can represent aspects of his or her reality to an ethnographer" (Pink, 2001, p. 69). In short, photo elicitation interviews are qualitative interviews that ask research subjects to comment on photographs, use photographs in answering questions, or otherwise detail their perspective on an issue with the aid of visual materials. For this study, advancing data collection via these photographic interviews seemed pertinent, per the research interest in capturing narratives, stories, and the unique experiences of research participants as they teach and learn in green buildings.

Early advocates for photographic interviewing suggested a great potential for qualitative researchers. Collier (1957) noted that "pictures elicited longer and more comprehensive interviews but at the same time helped subjects overcome the fatigue and repetition of conventional interviews" (p. 858). Contemporary researchers have not waned in their support for the technique. Harper (2002) explained: "photo elicitation mines deeper shafts into a different part of human consciousness than do words-alone

interviews" (pp. 22-23).

For this study, after the reflexive photography stage had been completed, participants were asked to participate in individual interviews that incorporated reflection on their photographs and their journal entries. The intent to interview each subject individually was an attempt to avoid group think and/or the potential for socially desirable answers (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Each participant was asked a series of questions, born of the research questions detailed above. These included questions about participant expectations of the green community college at the outset of their experience on campus, the discoveries they have made about their green environment, their experience as students and teachers as affected by a green building, and their reflections on how green buildings have changed how they behave as a student, teacher, and/or individual in general. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed; that analysis formed the basis for deliberation and synthesis found in the later chapters of this dissertation.

Focus groups were considered as a possible alternative or complement to data collection methodology described above. Ultimately, faculty and student schedules prohibited any gathering of more than two participants at any one time, and the idea was abandoned.

Data Analysis

Data collected via this research included participant photographs, participant journals, and transcripts of interviews. Data analysis focused on participant journals and transcriptions of interviews. Where semiotic analysis of photographs may lead to

meaningful discoveries, the proposed research questions would seem to emphasize texts that are more direct in detailing the experiences and perspectives of teachers and learners in green community college. Future research may seek to employ methods as outlined by Rose (2001) in the interpretation of photographs without assistance from research subjects.

To advance raw data into usable results, a systematic approach of organization and interpretation is required. In this case, a set of codes was devised to aid in identifying themes among participant responses. Sometimes called “categorizing analysis” (Maxwell, 2005) or “categorical aggregation” (Stake, 1995), this process included multiple reviews of the data and, ultimately, identifying topics or themes that recur among participant responses. Scholars suggest that this descriptive level of data analysis should not rely on predetermined topics for categorization—instead, researchers should allow themes to emerge from the data themselves (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Codes may include, but are not limited to, perspectives held by subjects, subjects' ways of thinking, process codes, activity codes, event codes, strategy codes, relationship codes, narrative codes, and methods codes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). After data is assigned to one or more codes, additional review will be conducted to discover relationships, juxtapositions, or other relevant eccentricities among data in each code group and across groups. Indeed, after significant reflection on the data gathered here, these discoveries served as the foundation for analysis and synthesis found in later chapters.

Exploratory Study

Scholars of qualitative methods often recommend that researchers engaged in new projects conduct exploratory studies before contacting the actual population to be studied. Sometimes called “pilot studies,” these can aid a researcher in refining the methodological approach used to collect and analyze data (Jupp, 2006; Stebbins, 2001). In order that the collaboration with research participants proceed as smoothly as possibly over the course of the research proposed here, I met with one full-time and one part-time faculty member with community college teaching experience, and engaged them in a brief exploratory study using the same methodology detailed above. The feedback that these exploratory participants offered regarding oral and written instructions provided to participants, comfort level in using the required technology, the journaling process, the photo elicitation interview process, and the optimal time allowed for each component of data collection were invaluable when finalizing the data collection plan.

Intended Timeline

The following timeline was suggested upon proposal of this research. With few exceptions, the timeline was followed explicitly. Two participants needed more time than originally allotted to complete reflexive photography. One student participant was unable to meet for an in-person interview during the scheduled time, and that interview was completed via phone at a later date.

Description	***Draft dates for completion of task***
Arrange for participants in pilot study	Week 1
Distribute materials (incl. camera and written instructions) to participants in pilot study	Week 1
Collect materials from pilot study participants	Week 3
Process film from pilot study	Week 4
Schedule photographic interviews with pilot study participants	Week 4
Conduct photographic interviews with pilot study participants	Week 5
Collect feedback from participants regarding successes and challenges in pilot study	Week 6
Revise materials as needed	Week 8
Liaise with representatives from host location (SLCCW); negotiate specifics of research	Week 8
Build snowball sample	Week 12
Visit host location and meet with participants; offer written and oral instructions regarding photography and journaling; train participants in use of cameras.	Week 15
Collect participant cameras and journals	Week 17
Schedule photographic interviews with research participants	Week 18
Conduct photographic interviews with research participants	Week 22
Begin transcription and data analysis	Week 22

Location and Participants

This research was conducted at St. Louis Community College-Wildwood (Wildwood). This is the newest campus in the St. Louis District, opened in August of 2007, and the first community college campus in the United States that has been 100% LEED-certified (SLCC, 2008). That is to say, all facilities that comprise the Wildwood campus have some degree of LEED certification. There are several factors that made this location especially attractive for this research. At the outset of this research, it was hoped that the fact that the entire campus is considered "green" by third parties would reduce participant confusion and reduce logistical complication. Additionally, it was hoped that the relative youth of the campus would aid faculty and students when making comparisons between Wildwood and other community college facilities. Both of these expectations were met in practice.

Participants included seven members of the Wildwood faculty, and seven College students in a variety of disciplines. The decision to emphasize these two groups—rather than administration, support staff, or others—reflects an interest in collecting the perspectives of those most closely involved with the core business of teaching and learning. Per concerns about the use of minors in human subjects research, no participants under the age of 18 were included in the study. Sampling methodology is discussed in the following section.

Sampling

There are diverse precedents to consider when designing a qualitative research sample. Past research has capitalized on the strengths of random, quota, cluster, and non-probability sampling in working with populations. When building a proposal for this research, snowball sampling emerged as the most compelling option for discovering the unique stories that the Wildwood community might have to share. To employ this type of sampling, I contacted key leaders at Wildwood and the St. Louis District offices to solicit their recommendations regarding faculty or students who have had some unique experience in the new green community college. I contacted those nominees to inquire about their interest in this research project, and also asked for their recommendations regarding other faculty and/or students with similarly unique stories to share. The intention here was not to build a collection of stories that are necessarily representative of all community college faculty and students, but to capture the unique stories of participants that may inform stakeholders at other colleges considering green building projects.

Qualitative research and snowball sampling do present some challenges to researchers, given their relative lack of definition of when to consider data collection complete. Scholars of qualitative research note that these methods often require a flexible research design, where “neither the number nor the type of informants needs to be specified beforehand” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 92). Additionally, scholars note the potential for sample homogeneity when using the snowball technique, as faculty and

students are less likely to know people whose experiences are drastically different than their own (Jupp, 2006). To counteract this potential for homogeneity, I complemented the snowball sample with some characteristics of quota samples: where suggestions from key leaders and research participants became exceedingly similar, I worked to find new leaders with recommendations to share. Ultimately, this was rarely necessary, as the recommendations from key leaders captured a healthy cross-section of community college stakeholders, including part-time faculty and students, first-semester students, first-generation students, and other unique groups.

Role of the Researcher

In any qualitative study, the researcher should seek an understanding of their own biases, valuables, interests, and characteristics, and how each might influence the process and outcome of their research (Creswell, 2003). Scholars of visual ethnography would seem to concur: “Researchers should maintain an awareness of how different elements of their identities become significant during research. For example, gender, age, ethnicity, class and race are important in the way researchers are situated and situate themselves in ethnographic contexts” (Pink, 2001, p. 20). My background and experiences, then, seem an important consideration among other elements of this research design.

Before moving to Austin, TX, to join the Community College Research Program, I spent five years at a community college outside Chicago, IL. My roles at the college included administrator, teacher, librarian, project manager, faculty liaison, student group advisor, and grant writer. These years spent immersed in building opportunities for at-risk

populations to engage in higher education advanced my interest in social issues. At the forefront of these growing interests were equity and access to the resources needed to improve quality of life, born and nurtured over a 15-year career in libraries starting with a volunteer experience at 12 years of age. During the months of data collection, I served as an Intern at Johnson County Community College (KS), where I supported college fund development initiatives and a variety of other creative and analytical projects.

Before data collection began, I worked to minimize how my own personal characteristics might influence participant responses. Whenever possible, neutral language was chosen for interviews and instructions, and neutral sites for meetings will be used, to encourage participant comfort. I attempted to learn about Wildwood social norms such as dress code, and worked to match these norms as much as possible. As research progressed, I focused attention on participant photographs and written journals, as opposed to my visit to campus. Ultimately, the snowball sampling technique discussed above helped me develop relationships with research participants that evolved around the data being collected, and less around personal impressions between myself and participants.

Ethics in Visual Research

Ethical considerations are a priority in any research, especially those that include human subjects (Bulmer, 1982; Homan, 1991). As per the guidelines of The University of Texas (2008), informed consent and participant confidentiality played a role in building a comfortable, safe environment for research subjects. Standard procedures per the Office

of Research Support and the University's Institutional Review Board were followed explicitly. Data has been used for research purposes only. As a researcher, I endeavored to build mutual understanding with participants regarding expectations for privacy. As a result, participants demonstrated feelings of comfort and safety that seemed to aid in eliciting impactful results. Given the nature of the research, there was very little potential for participant mental or physical harm in the short- or long-term.

Pink (2001) notes some ethical considerations specific to doing visual research. Permission to photograph and permission to reproduce photographs for future use was negotiated with officials at St. Louis Community College-Wildwood before data collection began. Pink also notes that “ethnographers need to judge, or ask (if appropriate), if there are personal or cultural reasons why some people may find particular photographs shown to them in interviews or discussions offensive, disturbing or distressing” (p. 42). Pink also recommends paying close attention to participant concerns about the potential for exploitation when doing visual research. These remained key guidelines throughout this research project.

Limitations

As in any study, there are factors in the research design above that limit the potential impact of findings. As noted above, the use of the case study method and snowball sampling technique limits the generalizability of results. The presence of a researcher is a foreign experience for many, and may affect behavior; care was taken to create an environment where participants are free to contribute their own perspectives,

rather than socially desirable behavior. The use of visual methods in research introduces technology that may be unfamiliar to participants, or somehow otherwise affect the input gathered by participants. Though these are noted here as limitations, over the course of data collection these factors seemed to contribute to a unique and engaging experience for myself and research participants.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

Data collection was conducted during the spring academic semester of 2009. Participants were recruited with the assistance of a college relations staff person at St. Louis Community College—Wildwood, whose connections with both students and faculty proved invaluable in selection of a diverse group of candidates. After approval from The University of Texas' Institutional Review Board, participants were contacted for initial, informational interviews. During these conversations, participants learned about the scope of the research and their responsibilities, should they choose to continue as part of the research. Each participant who confirmed their interest was asked a short series of biographical questions—results of which are shared in the sketches below. Each confirmed participant submitted an address, which was used to send the participant a disposable camera and one page of instructions—a recap of that initial, informational conversation. Participants were given several weeks to use the camera to document their experience as teachers and learners in and around the Wildwood campus. Instructions provided for this step in data collection were purposefully broad, as to afford each participant a large amount of freedom when making images that represented their experience and perspective. Participants were given the option of keeping journals that recorded comments about select photos—only two participants opted to keep such records: one student and one faculty member. Upon completion of photography, participants returned the cameras via stamped envelope, addressed to the researcher, that

had been provided with the camera mailing. A sample of the photographs produced by participants during reflexive photography is included as an appendix to this dissertation.

Follow-up interviews were scheduled for a week in early April, 2009, chosen to minimize conflict with school closures, major assignments, and final exams. Interviews were scheduled with each individual participant, and rooms for each interview were reserved with the assistance of an administrative assistant at the College. Administrative contact upon arrival to campus was intentionally minimal, so as to maintain the integrity and purity of the student and faculty voices gathered here. A total of two meetings with College administrators were scheduled, for the purpose of thanking the College for their willing participation in this study. One of these interviews was canceled per schedule conflicts; the second meeting took place on the last day on campus—Friday, April 10th—after all participant interviews were complete.

The sections below detail the results of data collection. Results are organized by participant. Pseudonyms have been assigned to each participant to preserve confidentiality and privacy. Each section begins with a short biographical sketch of the participant, followed by a description of the content of photo elicitation and qualitative interviews. This section will include descriptions, comments, and narratives shared by each participant via journals or via interviews. Finally, one story or collection of stories from each participant has been set aside as an "illuminating" piece of information, so labeled for being especially unique or otherwise compelling.

Student Data

Japhy Ryder

Japhy Ryder—biographical sketch

Japhy Ryder is a 19-year-old white male student at St. Louis Community College—Wildwood. Japhy is not married and has no children. Japhy was born and raised in St. Louis, and with the exception of a 5-month stay in California, has lived in the St. Louis area his entire life. A graduate of public primary and secondary schools, Japhy had several changes of plan regarding life after high school. He initially planned to attend an arts-focused college in Chicago, though ultimately ended up at Missouri State University in Springfield. In his own words, Japhy "hated it at Mo State, and came back home." Having only just returned for the spring semester of 2009, Japhy is a first-semester student at SLCC—Wildwood. His first impression is positive, and he remarks that he "likes it a lot more than [he] expected to."

Japhy's interests center around creative pursuits, including visual and performing arts. At SLCC—Wildwood he studies photography, graphic design, art history, jazz history, with coursework in college algebra added per College requirements. He counts typography and music among his extracurricular interests—Japhy plays several instruments, including cello, piano and guitar. He works a part-time job at a local deli, though mentioned displeasure with the work.

Japhy hopes to transfer and "eventually finish a degree," though he seems

comfortable with a relatively loose plan regarding when and where that achievement will happen. He offered that his mother has completed an Associate's Degree, and his father did not attend college.

Japhy Ryder——Photo-elicitation and interview

Throughout our discussion of his photographs, Japhy reported on both the subject matter of his photographs, and the artistic qualities he hoped to imbue via chosen angles and relationships present in his images. While there are people present in six of Japhy's photographs, he admitted that his focus was on the architectural elements and green features of the Wildwood building. He praised the architecture on campus, repeatedly calling the arrangement “nice” and “open.” Japhy offered: “the school is very, very industrial, but it's still very warm. As cold as the architecture is, the way the light comes in, and the way the materials play off the light, it's really nice... What's nice is there's this blend of different architectural styles—taking the best [from each]. There's a lot of windows—even in between the small gaps [in masonry].” He added comments on the sanitary conditions on campus: “Notice how clean it is—no cigarette butts, and all that. And that's in part because it's new, but also because they keep it clean. There's definitely a cleanliness about the place.”

During our interview, Japhy revealed that he “didn't really expect anything” when coming to Wildwood. He remarked that he's had a harder time making friends at Wildwood, which was strange for him, a self-described extrovert. Japhy made interesting comparisons to his experience in high school and at another College he attended before

Wildwood. He recalls his previous experience at Missouri State with distaste, save the friends he made while there. He did note that “the University setting was nice—there was a very collegiate feel. Where I ate, where I slept—everything was really close. That was and still is one of the things I can't stand about St. Louis—especially up here. Not so much in the city, but out here, everything is so far apart. For somebody who wants to go Chicago, who wants to live in the city, it's hell for me... I have to walk a mile to go to the grocery store. That very much gets on my nerves. But the biggest difference... I'm sure it's because it's a commuter school. When I was at Missouri State, I did everything with the University, whereas I feel it's like... here, I come here, then I go home, then I come here, and then I do this, do that. Two totally different feels.” Japhy agreed that, at Missouri state, the College was at the center of his life, while Wildwood is but one small piece of it. In further discussion, Japhy had a positive reaction to the possibility of moving Wildwood closer to the center, should the opportunity to do so arise. “Definitely—maybe if there was more of a sense of community. Even Meramec to some extent has that a little more. This campus is just so new, I think that's part of it. And because there's only one building right now, it doesn't feel much more than a building. It's a great building, but it's only one thing. If it was a bigger campus, with a little more going on, I'd be OK spending more time here. I'd like it if there was another student space to spend time in. Here, there's the kitchen area, and the student lounge area, but they're pretty disconnected. It'd be nice if there was a cafeteria."

Japhy impressed me with his familiarity with many of the green features on

campus—describing in detail the way that the air intakes circulate air; the way the use of whiteboards save on paper; the use of motion-sensing lights or alternative lighting strategies to conserve energy; the “well-designed” workspaces in science classrooms; and the use of space-saving shelving in the library, which in Japhy's words, “are really cool looking, and they can still be very open.” Though his mastery of the green qualities on campus is notable, he admitted that his orientation to these features has been less than formal: “I learned about them from teachers, the publicity lady... they give tours a lot. People come in and they talk about it a lot, so you just pick up stuff.” Later in our conversation, Japhy added: “They have a lot of tours going through—you can tell it's something that they are very proud of, and very serious about promoting.” During our interview, I asked Japhy if he or other students would be interested in other types of orientation to the green building, to which he responded: “I think people are looking for other ways to learn about the green things on campus—something more formal. I think it'd be really cool. There is not a campus tour for students, that I know of. At least not one that is well advertised. The tours seem to be for special guests.”

Japhy was one of many to photograph the green roof at Wildwood, but one of a very few to actually get beyond the locked doors and make images from close up. He confirmed that his access to the roof was a special arrangement: “I just talked to the media relations staff person. I believe, eventually, that you're going to be able to walk out there. That's what we hear.”

Japhy seems to have enjoyed his experience at Wildwood to date, though seemed

to reserve final judgment on some campus features, like the standardization of classrooms. “In some classes, the environment seems cold. It depends on the people who are there... One good thing about the classrooms being the same—if you have to do presentations, if you have to use technology, once you have used it in one room, you know what you're going to have in the others. That's really nice.” Japhy made note of the campus smoking policies when talking about some of his outdoor photographs: “I think it's cool because it makes it a little bit nicer when there's not cigarette butts all over. That said, I have the occasional cigarette. I don't smoke, but sometimes it's annoying that, on that rare occasion that I want one, I have to go for a walk. People actually walk over across the street from campus. There's cigarette butts all over up there—even in the winter.”

Japhy has had some opportunity to be involved in discussion about future building phases at Wildwood: “The President has come around to some of our classes—my Art History class, she actually came in and sat down. We talked about 'what else would you like' and what else is going to be happening... we talked about having more of a music space—me being a musician, I wish we had a piano here. We also talked about making more art classrooms... we still only have one.” Over the course of our conversation, Japhy also presented an argument for growing the campus library: “The library is small—small in number of books. I wouldn't say that I could go to the library and say I need something about [a certain subject] and expect to find it.” Japhy also advised that additional gallery space for artists and art students would be helpful additions in future buildings at

Wildwood, and took some time to dream about a garden or community farm on campus: “That would be great. I've never done any farming... But the fact of the matter is, there are people who do. And if that's something that could draw people in, then that's something to do."

When asked about unique opportunities on the green campus, Japhy cited the green arts festival that was upcoming, and even talked about the opportunity to participate in this research as a positive experience that would not have happened were he not enrolled at Wildwood. He emphasized that the College does seem to be actively empowering students to weave green ideas into their life: “Here, they say, 'we are green, and you need to help us keep it up.' There are extra duties, privileges—a different view of the whole thing, and I think it's very positive.” Though he is less pleased about the size and location of the school, he did comment: “I was able to make an appointment with the President of the College. That kind of closeness is nice. It might not have happened if I was one of 50,000 students.” The student experience at Wildwood is not without its challenges, however—Japhy explained his frustration with the “limited choices as to teachers and classes,” and noted his specific displeasure with the secretaries on campus, calling them “not terribly helpful.” He confirmed that the green idea is slow in making its way in to the College curriculum, and advised that “in the classes I'm in you really can't... you can't really weave green in to jazz history. At least, I'd be interested to see how it's done. I do get a sense that it is being brought in more, compared to Missouri State.”

Near the end of our interview, Japhy offered his advice to future leaders of

community colleges seeking to go green: “What it comes down to is this—don't be afraid to try something new. If there's a new technique, what's the harm in trying? We're never going to know if it is going to enrich an experience unless we try. So I would say, don't be afraid to try. And also, I wouldn't be afraid of flaunting it. Talk about it, let it be known. Make sure you stay true to it. I think Wildwood is staying true—I think they're doing a great job. And I like that a lot.” I asked Japhy if his experience at Wildwood would affect his decision-making process when thinking about transferring to another school, to which he responded: “Yes. I'm at a point where I have a lot of opportunities, including finishing up school here. I was expecting to come here and think: oh my god, I can't wait to go somewhere else. But I don't mind it here, which is a nice surprise. It's fit well with where my life has gone. If I transfer, I'll bring some of this with me. If I see things pointlessly being wasted, I'd speak up."

An Illuminating Story from Japhy

During our conversation, I shared with Japhy what I had learned from faculty member Cody Pomeray about the mixing of different levels of art classes at Wildwood. He responded: "I'm kind of torn. Part of me doesn't mind it. One thing I liked about the art classes I took at Missouri State was that I wasn't the best, I wasn't the worst. I felt like I always had something to strive to get better at. Whereas unfortunately in this class, my design quality, is one of the better ones, if not the best. I don't say that as a pompous thing... it's a little frustrating for me because I think some of the stuff I have is very good, but it never hurts to have something to strive for. On one of these pieces, there was a part

that I wasn't happy with, but my first instinct was to say that it's not going to matter... it's not like anybody's are going to be better than this one, so who cares. That's not good. That makes you lazy... The teachers are challenging me, but maybe it's just that there's not enough Design Two students." Before closing this part of our dialogue, Japhy made sure to add a positive note: "It's actually great sometimes—one of the people I talk with the most is a Design One student. Sometimes he'll mention something that they're working on, he'll say something, and I'll really like it, and incorporate it in to my project."

Amy Moriarty

Amy Moriarty—biographical sketch

Amy Moriarty is female student in her early twenties who lives in Eureka, Missouri. Amy graduated from high school in 2004, and had been at Wildwood for a year at the time of our introductory conversation. She is slowly but surely making a transition to the University of Missouri at St. Louis (UMSL) to study Psychology, though cherishes the money saved by taking credits at the community college. Amy noted: "At Wildwood, at least I'm not paying a lot of money to do my math class." In the spring of 2009, Amy was taking 10 hours at Wildwood and 3 at UMSL via an extension program that allows her to take University courses on the Wildwood campus. Her time at Wildwood has not been her first experience on a campus of the St. Louis Community Colleges—Amy was previously a student at the Meramec, Florissant Valley, and Forest Park campuses. Amy is a self-described people person, and hopes to be a high school or college counselor upon completion of her studies.

Until recently, Amy worked at a St. Louis school district with autistic children, though noted that she had to leave the job per the exorbitant amount of money spent on gas commuting to work. She has since taken a job at an electronics retailer, installing car audio systems. Other extracurricular activities include a women's rights group and innovations group at work, the Environmental Club at Wildwood, and various walks and other events for charitable causes.

Amy is a first generation college student. Though she did not know that Wildwood was green upon her first visit to campus, she now lists the green features second among the top reasons she continues to take classes at Wildwood—the first being proximity to her home in Eureka. Though she offered suggestions for improvement throughout our interviews, Amy offered that she "love[s] this school."

Amy Moriarty—photo elicitation and interview

Like her peers in the Wildwood Environmental Club, Amy expressed a mixture of optimism and concern about how Wildwood realized green ideas on campus. Amy returned 18 photographs in total, including images of several pictures of green products for sale in the College bookstore, the College's “green kiosk,” and many features of the building and grounds, such as the air-circulating fans and the pond outside the building.

Amy noted that she had few expectations upon arrival to Wildwood: “I came here the very first semester they opened. I didn't know it was green. When it was being built, I didn't know it was green. I was more like 'sweet—five minute drive to school.' But then I walked in and thought it was pretty cool. It was a lot different. Calming. The teachers

here are so much nicer here than they are anywhere else, unfortunately. Every once in a while I'll have a good teacher somewhere else, but every teacher I've had here, every advisor, I absolutely love every person on the staff. It's just a different atmosphere.” Over the course of our interview, she explained her fondness for the College commitment to open spaces and use of natural light: “I think that's how it should be. Like a lot of these faculty offices, the [student lounges] all line the outer wall. I think it makes it a better atmosphere for students.” She also emphasized her appreciation for the campuses efforts in partnering with regional universities and offering their courses on campus. Per Amy, the College manages to combine these unique experiences with a more intimate experience on campus: “I like the fact that this is a smaller building—you get a lot more face-to-face. Half of the people here know my name. Compare that to Meramec, where I spent most of my time studying, I don't see any of the teachers walking by, no one remembers my name. They think I look familiar, but they walk on by. Here, they stop and ask you how you are doing. It's more of a home setting, as opposed to a huge school.”

Like many other participants, Amy made images of the College's recycling bins—and added some details regarding the Environmental Club's plan to label all bins with stickers that read “paper,” “aluminum,” or “glass” for recyclables, and “landfill” for all non-recyclable items. “We also did a study where we went in every trash can for three days and then picked up every single thing that could have been recycled. It was kind of a ridiculous amount, considering there wasn't that much in the trash... we made a statue out of it, which had stuff hanging off of it, and made a sign that said, 'Is any of this yours?' I

think we have to do another study and see if the labels have made an impact." Amy noted that there are some issues when it comes to recycling in the classroom: "If my Math teacher would remind everybody to recycle all their math papers, I bet that would save a couple of trees, at least. But it doesn't really happen. I kind of wish they had a huge recycling bin in every math classroom, because when people are organizing their stuff at the end of class, they throw it away before they make it to the recycling bins. They throw it out before they get five feet out the door. The teachers hog the recycling bins and hide them in the back, and they don't even use them. They could encourage students to just make a pile and recycle it when they leave, but they don't."

Amy used some of her photographs to compare Wildwood to some of the other campuses in the St. Louis district. She explained that, while Wildwood isn't completely successful in banning smoking on campus, it is an improvement over the other colleges. In another image, Amy described how the bathrooms at Wildwood are a step up from other St. Louis campuses. She focused on "the automatic sinks and the automatic dryer. I walked into campus at Meramec where the water is just running and running and running. I'm assuming that they're paying for their water bill and water being wasted, and going straight down the drain... I think it's cleaner this way too cause you're not touching it." Amy made other comparisons that cast Wildwood in a positive light: "Florissant Valley is probably the worst. You run in to people—it's crowded. People aren't very positive. There are people running around the hallways—it's crazy. The main campus—I hated the smoking area. No one is very positive. Here, it's very open—you have the windows, and

the light. The lights are brighter, crisper—more white than a dim yellow. Forest Park is beautiful, but it's got that same dingy, dark, brick—everything is brick. Here, everything is light, and it works better for learning." There are parts of campus she called "sterile," including "the outdoor seating—it just looks like a hospital. That's what I wish I could change." But in general, Amy said that "it's a really nice school. It's a lot newer than the other ones—it's a nice change from the dark brick walls."

Amy described some of the things that might be missing from the present campus arrangement at Wildwood: "There's no cafeteria, no gym. No swimming pool. There's a small lobby, which works for us, because there's not a lot of people, but certain times of day it's pretty crowded." She agreed that the Wildwood faculty can be "squished" into some of their spaces, and reported that she has seen two or four faculty sharing an office. "My math teacher sits with someone else—she's got math stuff everywhere. I don't know if I could share that."

Amy had high praise to share for the Wildwood bookstore: "I love the bookstore. I love the ladies that work in the bookstore. They're just awesome... They like a lot of the green stuff, and when somebody has a positive attitude about something, I think it encourages other people... They sell reusable shopping bags for the grocery store... Every single book that we sell up here is all about green, like Clean Up Your School, What's Going On, Green Leading, Green Shopping, How to Recycle." Amy shared that the bookstore employees are proactive in asking students what they might like to see for sale on campus, though admitted that it has been a struggle to help the College do away with

things like Styrofoam cups, and add healthier food options. Given the lack of a cafeteria on campus, Amy wished that the bookstore would move beyond what she called “a wall of candy.”

I asked Amy how she had learned about the green features at Wildwood, to which she responded: “I asked somebody questions. I think I had a music teacher probably about year and half ago that explained to me about the roof and the lighting. I'm not sure if that's exactly what they're doing. I'm not positive, but it makes sense. I really like that idea, not using as much light. They actually make it pretty bright.” Though she captured a photo of the College's “green kiosk,” she reported: “when I first started school here it actually used to play. I don't think that it works now.” She did have a well-developed understanding of what the kiosk was supposed to do, but said that she thought it was “broken” at the time of our interview. Amy agreed that College employees are key in spreading an understanding of the College's green features: “My music teacher is really in to the campus—early in the semester, before class, he'll take time to ask us if we had seen something on campus, then tell us the reason why it's there. But not a lot of teachers are embracing it—or they're used to it and just walk on right past it. But you've got to think, new students are coming on campus every semester—the high school graduates, this is their first semester, so they don't know a lot of this stuff... No one has come and said 'let me tell you about this stuff. I'm the President, and let me tell you why we did this.' I think it would be nice if the teachers read something, or even if it's just during the first week of school, if they did something.” Amy anticipated that an investment in teaching students

about these features might affect future enrollment: “I think it would make more of an impact. Maybe [the students] have a younger brother or sister, and they would tell them 'hey, this school is cool, you should come here.' I can guarantee you if they think something is cool, they are going to want to do it, too. I think it has to be the right people explaining it the right way.”

Our conversation continued with some discussion of the planning processes for future buildings at Wildwood. Amy indicated that she had not been involved in any conversations yet: “I haven't heard anything about the next buildings... not yet. I don't think enough people go here yet. I think they probably need to make some of their money back and see that it is a good investment. The school is not full in classes—I don't think a lot of people know this place is here.” Amy added that the green features on campus aren't a main topic of conversation among students: “Not a lot of people comment, or notice things like the lighting. Not a lot of people do—they're running late, they breeze in to class... I don't really hear a lot of feedback.” This presents a challenge for students like Amy when trying to recruit students for extracurricular activities; Amy advised: “I don't see many people who want to make a change—we have three people on Environmental Club. I had 30 people sign up and three people actually come to meetings. That's it. Nobody actually wanted to commit.”

At the end of our interview, I asked Amy if her time at Wildwood has affected how she lives her life away from campus, and she responded: “Definitely. I actually talked to my mom about recycling a while back, but she never stuck with it. Then, I told

her I was in environmental club, and out of nowhere, she just picked up—we used to have three trash cans that we'd leave out every week. Now, she's built a compost pile in the backyard, and we have two recycling bins. We recycle pretty much everything that we can."

An Illuminating Story from Amy

Much of the frustration that Amy shared during our interviews stemmed from ideas generated by students and the resistance encountered from other College stakeholders. Early in our conversation, Amy noted that there was a lack of living plants inside the College building. In one of her photographs, Amy presented what she called "the one plant on campus," and related her struggles in getting the College to bring more greenery to the building. Through the Wildwood Environmental Club, she tried to develop "an art show, where people decorated pots for plants, and make it their pot. Didn't work. Not at all. We wanted to have 'made by Amy' on these pots around campus, so the students would go find them and check them out. [The President] thought that it would look tacky. So we changed it to the clear rocks, bamboo and all that... But it would be nice if they could put a little more passion in to it, instead of something that just looks nice. Even if it does look like a kindergartner painted the pot—the students did it. The students pay to go to school here. Let them paint the pot." Amy expressed some frustration at the continued challenges in realizing the bamboo plant idea, and cited a series of ongoing meetings that have been needed to build support among College administrators. Amy mentioned a similar frustration with not being able to access the

green roof: “There's all the rooftop plants, but it's not stable so they keep the doors locked. So it's kind of like 'hey look at this,' but you can't go outside...but it's a start. I've been trying to talk to a lot of people so see if they can get maybe get one or two chairs to sit out there, but then again I'm sure the liability, all that kind of stuff... Just wish they would have gone a little bit further with the rooftop. There are actually a couple different rooftop access areas in the building that actually the staff wants to go outside to eat lunch but none of them are finished.” Amy indicated that she understood the President of the College was similarly frustrated; Amy recalled a conversation where “she was actually complaining about not being able to go outside.” Amy added her thoughts on the challenge she has experienced in helping create access to outdoor spaces at the College: “We're supposed to make a nature trail around the campus. That got limited as well so now we're starting out with trail that goes around the pond... We have 166 acres of land back that way that is untouched. We can't go. But it's a start.” Later in our conversation, Amy suggested that it would be a good thing for Wildwood to start a composting program, though anticipated that there would be much strategizing needed before any such initiative could be launched. “I don't know how nasty that would be—and who would take care of it. We have all these great ideas in our meetings, and they just get shoved down in to the ground because we'd have to take care of it. But I think that it would be a good idea. I think we have a small enough amount of food waste that we could probably do it... That will probably be something that has to be thought about, and re-thought about, and scratched off, and thought about again.”

Raphael Urso

Raphael Urso—biographical sketch

Raphael Urso is a 20-year-old black male student from Wildwood, Missouri. Raphael is not married and has no children. Raphael is a relatively recent transplant to the St. Louis area, having attended high school in Terra Haute, Indiana. Upon moving to Missouri with his family in 2007, he enrolled at St. Louis Community College at Meramec, and spent one year taking classes on that campus. More recently, Raphael has enjoyed his coursework in Business Administration at the Wildwood campus, "right across the street," from where he and his family live. Both of Raphael's parents have college degrees. Raphael's brother Simon is also enrolled at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. Simon was also a participant in this research project.

Raphael has one part-time job, working on campus as a note taker for disabled students. He appears on the cover of select print advertising prepared by the Wildwood campus, and seems a popular person on campus. In his spare time, Raphael enjoys soccer, golf and running. He also collaborates with his brother on several music projects—they write, produce, and perform hip hop around the St. Louis area. Raphael's specialty is the creation of beats using a drum machine, and humbly reports some talent as a producer.

In the spring 2009 semester, Raphael reported that he was a full-time student, and intends to transfer to the University of Missouri at St. Louis in the fall to complete a Bachelor's in Business Administration. Eventually, Raphael hopes to go to law school and focus on sports or real estate law.

Raphael Urso—Photo elicitation and interview

My interviews with Raphael were among the first I conducted at the Wildwood campus. He seems as much an ambassador for the College as a student—his familiarity of green features on campus was impressive, and his enthusiasm for the Wildwood experience was high. Raphael lives "across the street" from campus, and returned 12 photographs that, in his words, captured "a day in the life" of his time at Wildwood. The images he captured include several common among all research participants—recycling bins, recessed fans, "no smoking" signs, and several lighting and window features on campus. Raphael reported that he feels the community is proud of the building, and that the campus is a point of interest for a broad age demographic. He reflected: "you know how back in the 70's and 80's when they said that the buildings were going to be floating or underwater in the year 2000? This is as far as we've gotten as to being futuristic type of thing. We took this stuff back by making it green. Not all mechanical and floating in the air."

Raphael confessed that he had few expectations upon arrival to Wildwood. "Honestly, I didn't know it was a green campus until I got on campus and overheard someone say that. The only thing I expected was a new building—different from the other place I was going. I kind of expected what it already is—a newer, modern place. That is what I expected—not someplace green. I don't think anyone knew until they came on the campus and someone tells you. I don't think anyone would know that." He added some thoughts on some of the student services on campus—including the library, which

he things is small, but “it's connected with all the library’s so you can trade books. They can get it to you in about a day.” Compared to his high school, Wildwood has smaller classes than he is used to, which has created opportunities to “connect with teachers” and “it allows you a chance to know your strengths and weaknesses as far as studying. You know what you need and you can get things faster by having that smaller scale of class.” While he noticed that things like alternative energies haven't been major subjects in his business classes, he mentioned that fiber optics have come up in information systems courses, which he described as “not really natural, but an energy saver. You run them off the sources at your house—you don’t have to go to an outside source. I think that was pretty cool.”

During our conversation about his photographs, Raphael talked about some of the unexpected things he's encountered at Wildwood. “The urinals are waterless. That is pretty wild. I thought about taking a picture of that and then I didn’t know if it would fly.” He also described the motion-sensitive lights with some wonderment, and commented about the open feeling of the campus architecture. “Everywhere you look, every ceiling is open. It’s pretty cool because it looks like a loft—just open ceilings. That is pretty interesting. You can see how everything works—that is really interesting to whoever comes in here. The lights—the position is not like a big old bright spotlight just shinning on you—everything is just natural. They don’t use much light but as you can see, it is all lit up. The way the windows are positioned—the lights are really small but they go a long way.” He appreciated Wildwood's commitment to recirculation of air:

“Besides the urinals of course, that is the coolest thing in this building, because it circulates and recirculates like it’s on a time schedule. If someone is sick, nobody else can get sick because it cleans the air... It’s pretty cool.”

Raphael was one of a very few people to make images of the space in between campus and the main access road—a smaller piece of land that overlooks less attractive air conditioning and other mechanical units that support the College. This is a part of campus that Raphael sees every day on his walk to and from classes. He described his relationship with this outdoor space: “Last semester, the grass and everything was up and wild. That was a real ecosystem right there, and it still is—they just cut some of the grass down I guess because it was winter. That right there, in the summertime, has a whole bunch of native flowers and grasses, and things like that. It stretches way back there. I was standing on the sidewalk, and sometimes the bugs will just jump out—you see the craziest bugs on that thing. It is literally an ecosystem. There are probably tadpoles and things in there. You can hear the crickets and all that freaky noise—it’s crazy—I like it... I wouldn’t suggest walking in there, but to look at it, it’s like botanical gardens but on a smaller scale. It’s right there—right next to the school and you can see. Right next to it is another world.” He added that he's seen a few people wandering around this space, and guessed that a few classes might be exploring this space, but agreed that the use of outdoors for teaching was still an “up and coming thing” at Wildwood.

Raphael revealed that all Wildwood students watch “the world's worst safety video” (complete with “horrible acting”) in “every class, every semester.” This prompted

some questions about how he's learned about the green features on campus—Raphael noted: “I took it upon myself to find out everything I can about this building. I’m still learning—there is a lot of stuff that is green and interesting about this building... I was asking questions because I overheard someone say this was a green building. Everyone wants to convert or transform what you have for the future into something green.” He added that the campus green kiosk has been a helpful resource, and that he feels comfortable approaching “any mindful or caring administrator, or teacher” with questions.

I asked Raphael how people reacted when he told people that he went to Wildwood, to which he responded: “They get pretty lit up and then they start asking questions, like oh I heard it was a green campus; oh do you guys do this there—do you do that there? I think some people think we build bonfires, sit around naked before class, but it’s not like that. I don’t get the misconception. A lot of people have yet to come here and experience it. It is one thing to read about it in the paper or hear about it on the radio, and see it in pictures on the Internet. It is a whole different experience to come and just live in the building and look inside and explore and go around. There are a lot of hidden things in this building that you would never know. There is a lot of stuff that I don’t even know. I find new stuff every day.” When prompted, Raphael added: “Last week, [I learned that] this carpet is recycled... someone told me. All the wires are made in a certain way and the light fixtures. [The lights] are recycled. The paint is green. I forget how but it is. Everything in this place—the only new thing in here is the glass. The obvious things,

like bookshelves and chairs, are new. Everything else is recycled or remanufactured to a green stature."

Raphael explained that for some of the classes he needs to take for his business degree, "I'm going to have to travel all the way across town—it's like going out of town... To go all the way out there is not economically sound. If you have class Monday, Wednesday, Friday, it's like a tank of gas every week." He will be able to take most of his classes at Wildwood—which he prefers for a variety of reasons: "To be able to have the opportunity to take the same classes there and get the same accreditation is a blessing... Just to have that opportunity to walk right across the street and do the same thing is amazing... It is a smaller community—you don't have to worry about being another number or just being known by your last name. Here, you really exist. We have the close knit and you feel it." Raphael described his experience at other colleges in the St. Louis district: "It's like jail. The boards are falling off—either lights are missing or hanging down. It's crazy man. It's like being in a boarding school. You see the bad boarding schools on T.V.—it's like that." He added: "At the Meramec campus, it was more like the college experience—just real loose—people playing Frisbee on the lawn—just college. Here it is very scholastic and more upscale, and more structured. You still have the college feeling and experience but it's more close knit—it's more about the classes—your focus."

I asked Raphael if his colleagues used the recycling bins on campus, to which he responded: "Oh yeah—people take advantage of it. Also, it is inadvertently making habits

in your personal life. What you do in one place becomes a habit and you train your brain. It's not just in school—now I pick stuff up off the ground and put it in the right place. It helps train your brain. There are a lot of things you can do around your house with the things you have that can conserve energy and help the ecosystem out that much more." He disclosed that he has gotten better at "cutting the lights off" at home; "here they go off automatically—you get used to seeing the lights go off. You remember that turning the lights off and it conserves energy at the same time. To see that and unconsciously just do it, I'll come back in and don't remember that I turned the lights off."

An Illuminating Story from Raphael

I asked Raphael what was missing from his Wildwood experience to date. His answer: "I would say more of a personal, social life, and more interesting clubs. Every school has clubs—volunteer clubs, religious clubs—more social clubs with friends. Everyone wants to party—that is the college life. That is the pre-notion of every school that you go to, regardless of how big or small it is. Here is West County; there is nowhere to party. Everyone has to go downtown—and that is 45 minutes to an hour downtown." Raphael agreed that Wildwood could help the students be greener by becoming more of a social hub, and helping them save gas. He added: "classes are generally Monday through Thursday—what about Thursday and Friday night? Campus life does a great job of hosting events but there is nowhere to go to just chill out and have fun. The events are fun, but what about the weekends or after classes? That is the only thing that is lacking. That would give people more of an incentive to come to school and learn about this

school. They will be able to see how it's made, how it's structured, and why it is done this way. That is what is lacking and that would be more great for this school... Everyone wants to have a social life regardless if you are on the computer all day playing games, or if you are the most popular person in school. Everyone wants to have a social life and feel that acceptance or have the opportunity to be accepted. School is cool but everyone doesn't want to be in class all the time." Raphael explained that he has made an effort to contribute to the social life on campus—he has brought his hip hop group to perform on campus on more than one occasion. He said that because of the open nature of campus, everyone heard the music—including the President. " She liked it," he noted, and remembered, "I don't think we even had the lights on."

Simon Urso

Simon Urso—biographical sketch

Simon Urso is a 19-year-old black male student from Wildwood, Missouri. He is a full-time student and has no wife or children. Like his brother Raphael, also a participant in this research, he is a recent transplant from Terra Haute, Indiana. Raphael graduated high school in 2007; the spring of 2009 was his second semester at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. Though his current studies are relatively general—in his words, he is "knocking about the prereqs"—he expressed a particular interest in visual arts in the longer term. Simon hopes to major in graphic design and minor in cinematography when he transfers—currently, he considers the University of Missouri at St. Louis and the St. Louis Art Institute among his more appealing options.

Simon works part time at a retail clothing store, and does freelance graphics for companies across the country. Like his brother, his interest in music is significant. Simon expressed hope that there may be a possibility of making music a full-time occupation "soon," though he noted his commitment to staying in school should that happen. He reported that he and his brother have a forthcoming single due out soon, and are in talks with various labels regarding distribution of the group's music. Simon noted that music has been part of his family's life for some time—he described his mother as a "well-renowned gospel singer," and that they grew up singing in church.

Simon seems a man with many options. Before the close of our introductory conversation, he noted that a marketing firm in Atlanta was busy recruiting him, and that location would put him in the "mecca" of hip hop. He also noted that he has but one semester before hoping to transfer, and was very proud of his own musical accomplishments in St. Louis.

Simon Urso—Photo-elicitation and interview

Simon brought a thoughtful and positive attitude to our conversations. Simon returned 20 photographs from the campus grounds and inside the Wildwood building, including images of him working on design projects for class. He appreciates his proximity to a college campus in West County: “I can walk to school and save some gas money. I walk to school rain, hail, sleet, snow—you can get up late—it’s beautiful.” Simon included images of his study space and study partner among his photographs. Like many other research participants, he reported that the student commons is a very “open”

space, though that quality sometimes contributes to noise problems in-between classes when students are moving about. Though noise is sometimes an issue, Simon informed me that he mostly stays on campus to study, as it is relatively free of distractions when compared to his home. Simon took photographs of his classroom spaces, as well, which he described as “spacious—the space is efficient—it’s not huge or small. It’s enough space not to be crowded but to still be comfortable.”

During photo elicitation, it became obvious that Simon had very specific things he wanted to capture during reflexive photography. These included images of geese that flock to the water features on campus, which he advised “will kill you. They were bad last year—I haven’t seen that many this year but last year, they used to stand in the middle of the road—hundreds of them. You had to beep your way through and they would just walk away.” He also photographed an irrigation ditch on campus, and noted: “when it rains, it drains more efficiently, in a more natural way of draining versus going into a sewer—it evaporates and goes back into the atmosphere.” Simon admitted that he learned about this function “by looking at it,” and hadn't confirmed that understanding with anyone on campus. Simon photographed the inside of one of the school's stairwells, which he agreed was “one of the only places on campus without any windows.” Along with the bathrooms, the lack of windows in these spaces seems to be intentional, as they are often designated as storm shelters—signage for which was captured in Simon's photographs. Simon was the only research participant to document the waterless urinals on campus, and added some description of the bathrooms on campus: “They are way

cleaner—way cleaner. They stay clean. You have to twist knobs and all that stuff—you had to open up a door to get in and out—you know what I mean—you always had to have a paper towel to open up the doors so your hands would stay clean. Here, you just wash your hands and walk out."

During our interview, Simon mentioned that Wildwood may not have been his first choice when doing his initial college planning: "I had it in my mind that I wanted to go to a university or something like that. I had a discussion with my father and we, economically, decided to send me here. I can always transfer to a university." Upon arrival, Simon described some surprises when learning about the College: "I wasn't expecting all of this when I started. I saw it being constructed and I thought it was going to be like high school again. I got here and it was totally different. I thought it was going to be small, and basically be all the same people. It is smaller than a university, but I enjoy it a lot—getting to know all the teachers and they know you—having a brand new space." He counts the clean air systems among the more positive qualities of campus: "The cool thing about being green is the air filtration system. I thought that was really sweet. I used to get sick in high school—here I can't even remember—I don't think I've even been sick since I started here. There are cool, healthy things going on... that knocks the ball out of the park. High school was just gross, man—the whole school would get the 24-hour virus or something like that. That is probably the biggest thing that you can't get anywhere else."

Simon remembered that some literature was sent to his home during the time he

was deliberating about his college choices, though observed that most of the learning he did about the green features on campus was done by asking questions of teachers and staff. “There was an answer for everything... As far as the staff, they were very well educated on the whole building. They knew what was going on.” He recalled his astonishment upon seeing the green roof for the first time: “I was on the phone and looked out there and couldn’t believe that there was grass on the roof. I couldn’t figure it out—was some kind of science experiment? I went and asked [a teacher] why there was grass on top of the building. I just stumbled across it. Basically everything about this place has its own story—a wow story.” Simon admitted that he hasn't been out on the green roof: “I haven’t tried it—I just don’t want an alarm to go off. I just stood there and admired it and saw what it was all about.”

Simon and I continued the conversation with some comparisons to his high school experience. He commented: “It is more personal—it’s not so crowded. Not only do you get to know the teachers on a one-on-one basis, but also the students and things like that.” Simon noted his appreciation for the student support services that the College has provided: “The tutoring process that they go through has been a lifesaver. Pretty much everything operates like a university but on a smaller, more intimate basis... I’m a hands-on learner—I need to see it. I need someone to sit down and explain it to me. As far as having the tutoring program here and walking through it, it has helped me get to different levels a lot faster than I would in a university.” He advised that, as Wildwood grows, it should strive to maintain that sense of closeness that he enjoys: “Community colleges

[need to] make sure it is an intimate experience as far as knowing your students and trying to learn their strengths and weaknesses. Have a strong tutoring program as far as English, math, and history—basically every subject." He did admit that this sense of closeness is not without its challenges: "Because it is smaller than the other campuses and the teachers get to know who you are, you don't get to slide as much if you were in a university. At universities, no one knows if you show up or not. That is one of the downfalls of it being so intimate—you can't backslide."

Compared to some of his student peers, Simon didn't seem to mind the lack of social activity on campus: "You don't mind being here—I've been here hours on hours, just studying. It's peaceful, you know... As far as being peaceful, you just don't have all the—you have a lot of activities and things going on but it's not so much as everyone in your face. At the universities, you always having people trying to draft you for one thing or another, so you are more focused here. One day I'll be in a fraternity, but for right now, I just need to be focused. As far as the peace, not having all those extra things that pop up and get in the way, it's been a blessing, really." Though he misses not having an indoor basketball court and other opportunities in athletics, he related his fondness for the way classrooms are set up, especially in his design coursework. "Our Art room is wonderful as far as the windows and things like that. It's easier to come up with ideas when you've got windows, and sit there are look at the pond and everything outside. It's might give you a different emotion like if it's raining outside, or if it's sunny—you don't know that if you are in a box. You are closed off from the world, and you go outside and see what it is."

An Illuminating Story from Simon

Simon revealed that his experience at Wildwood has had a significant impact on how he lives his live away from campus, especially regarding his recycling habits. “That is probably the biggest influence I’ve had. It is so in your face anywhere you go. There are three trashcans—you put paper here, plastic here, and trash here. You go home and do the same thing. It really has made a difference. It has become a routine as part of the disposal of things.” He advised that colleges could make similar impacts on their own students with a few simple activities: “Make sure that you have the whole recycle setup—getting everyone into the routine of properly disposing of things. Make sure everything goes to the right place. As far as grooming students into that, they can’t just throw things on the ground. I’ve learned to dispose of things correctly. If everyone starts to learn that, there will be a lot less problems with the ozone and landfills and all the stuff like that.” He didn't stop there—and emphasized other College activities that have influenced his behavior: “We have a health fair where a lot of green businesses come in, like green food and green products. They come in and teach you about those products that you probably would never have heard of it you hadn’t been going to a green building. There were products such as old tires—they cut them up and put them in playgrounds. I never knew that—I thought it was just mulch or something like that. Different healthy foods—there are different alternatives like meats…coming into a green school you learn how to operate outside of the school. It has a powerful influence on you. I might be throwing away something that might be valuable—like this water bottle. A year ago, I would have

thrown it in a regular trashcan, and it would have gone to a landfill. Who knows how long it would take this thing to disintegrate and grow into something? It teaches you guidelines, and it starts in a green building."

Chad King

Chad King—biographical sketch

Chad King is a white male student in his late teens or early twenties—he declined to give his specific age. Chad has no children and is not married. Originally from the St. Louis area, Chad dropped out of high school per a lack of interest and challenge, and completed a GRE some time later. Chad has been attending St. Louis community colleges since the summer 2008 semester, beginning with the Forest Park campus. In the fall of 2008, Chad moved his studies to the newly-opened Wildwood campus—per Chad, this campus is "closest to home, and has all the classes I need." In the spring semester of 2009, Chad reported taking nine hours of coursework in support of his degree plan in computer science. Chad reports that he is a first-generation college student.

Chad works a part-time job as a janitor off-campus. He spends significant time and energy as a key member of the small but influential Environmental Club at St. Louis Community College—Wildwood. His passion for environmental issues was evident throughout my time on campus—I was able to have multiple conversations with Chad, including in a formal interview setting. Among all students and faculty interviewed, Chad may have held the highest expectations for the College and what it meant to be a truly "green campus."

Chad King—photo elicitation and interview

Chad tapped into a place of deep frustration during our interview—some of which was directed at Wildwood, though the bulk of his frustration was directed at the outside world. It was obvious that Chad seeks to make a difference with his actions, though wonders what difference one person—or one campus—can make. Chad returned 16 photographs, including images of College classrooms, grounds, and the parking lot, and a picture of students smoking in front of a "no smoking" sign outside the Wildwood building. Chad was also the only participant to take photographs away from campus—an option given to participants so they might compare and contrast Wildwood to their lives away from school.

Chad explained that he wasn't aware that Wildwood was LEED certified before arriving on campus: "I didn't know it was a green building. It was different than Forest Park. It was nicer, newer—better surroundings, better atmosphere. Closer to home... I already understood some of the concepts they were talking about—recycling and everything else. So I didn't find it too hard to adapt. It's what's here, it's what you should do. I didn't know much about the fans. I thought it was more about heating and cooling—I'm still learning."

Chad compared his experience at Wildwood to other campuses in the St. Louis District: "Compared to Forest Park, there's no view like that. There, it's like a cell, the windows are little slits. I've had a Math class with little windows there, barely any windows at all. All the classrooms here have windows. The view, too, it gets you. The

view is relaxing. Helps with focusing when you're having trouble working." He advised that the view might be important for those people used to the landscape of West County: "I just like the open field, as well. Where I grew up, there is a lot of land. It feels familiar, comfortable." Chad struggled to think of ways that the College was building green ideas into the teaching and learning that happened on campus—he did share: "The things we're doing in Math are computer based, for the most part. They're trying to teach online, through videos, and doing the end product on the work online. But the process still takes a lot of paper. It seems like it's doing about half of what it should be. If they can develop a way where you can actually use an online notepad or something, without using scrap paper, then it would be fully environmentally friendly. It's a step, but there are flaws. The videos have issues—they are blocky, and it freezes sometimes. Sometimes it's not available." He did explain that, when technical issues arise, his teachers are open to feedback: "People will actually listen to me about that. I found a hole in the program, a flaw with it. So if I say anything, the teacher will really listen."

During our interview, Chad revisited the lack of public transportation to campus several times: "There's no bus stop. What's the point of a green campus with no bus stop? If you go further down past the gas station, the buses end out there—about a mile down the road. But there are shuttle express buses that go all the way to Eureka, but they don't stop on those routes. It sounds like there are cutbacks because St. Louis didn't approve the taxes for public transportation. They are still nickel and diming each other on little things. The President has been fighting—if she doesn't get anywhere, she's going to take

people down to the city hall and talk to them there, because she's so frustrated.” Chad later added that the need for public transit is exacerbated by the nearby YMCA: “It's isolated from public transportation in the same way that the College is. It's a real nice place, I'm sure that people would like to get to it. There's really no option for them to do so.” He seemed confused by the College's prioritization of parking lots over pursuing a transit solution: “They're planning to build more, because they're running out of space, instead of planning something for transit... I'm only six minutes down the street. It would be nice to have a bus. I don't know if I'd do it every day, but I'd try it for awhile. ” Chad also photographed the “lone bicycle” that he sees around campus, and confessed that he didn't know about the shower and lockers that have been built for visitors who ride to campus. Even if the facilities were better publicized, Chad had doubts as to whether it would be a good option for students: “It's mostly interstate or back roads leading to campus—it would be pretty dangerous. I don't think there's a bike rack on campus. There's not really biking people out here—there's no trails. It would be dangerous. You'd have to be really really close to be able to do it.”

Chad's frustration about the campus extended to things like the College's basketball court, which he said had been installed without conversation with students. “We never talked about that in student government—they just decided to do it and then one day it's up. I think they built that in between this year and last year. It's kind of far away, really—it doesn't make sense. It's isolated.” The lack of communication between students and College leadership came up again during conversations about future

buildings at Wildwood: “Student groups and student government haven't been part of any conversations about future buildings. Just sporadic comments from some teachers. They say it will be three to five years before something happens. That was a big question I had when I talked to the Vice President—he said that when there is interest, they will build it. But where do the people with interest go in the meantime? It's kind of disconnected.”

Chad did credit his experience with student government as one of the main ways he has been able to learn about the green features at Wildwood, though added some disclaimers: “We'd like to keep the rest of the students informed, too, but at this point they don't really listen. You can do flyers, and get information out, but they don't pay attention to it. You could ask people if they've heard about something, but they don't really pay attention to it. It's kind of frustrating.” He added that he has felt comfortable asking questions about the College facilities when they arise. Regarding an exterior photograph of some drainage on campus, Chad remarked: “This is a drain that drains to the retention pond. That's what Andy said—this guy who works downstairs. He was talking to someone else downstairs, and I raised my hand and butted in. I asked him if I could ask a question, and he said 'sure.' And we got talking, and he said that if I wanted to go on the roof, we could. I hadn't gotten to do that before.” Chad agreed that the orientation to campus facilities was both emerging and informal at Wildwood: “It just happens in conversations. I've never done any direct orientation or training... Many teachers don't know about the full extent of the green features—like the different settings you can have on the lights. I'm pretty sure they're learning, too.”

An Illuminating Story from Chad

During our conversation, Chad advised me that, as nice as the Wildwood facilities are, it doesn't take long for the people who use the building to compromise the intended environmental impact. “Everyone is going to photograph nice things, but they leave out the human aspect. In this one, I went outside, and just a few feet away from the door, they're just puffing away... Humans will do what they want to do, even at a green campus.” His frustration with the “human element” was explored deeper in his photographs from off campus, which included an alley near his house: “There's no recycling—just 10 or 12 dumpsters straight down that alley. Dumpster, dumpster, straight down the line. There's no ordinance for recycling. What's the point in having 12 dumpsters and no ordinances and have one school doing it? Why bother? Why bother coming to school and recycling when I drive right past all this every day? It would make more sense if it were a community effort. Then people who didn't recycle at the school would, and understand a little better.” Chad brought his frustration with “human behavior” and “human error” back to Wildwood, citing the fact that the college uses mercury-filled light bulbs in classrooms, which he called “very bad for the environment” once thrown away. Chad agreed that a broader and more collective effort built around common understanding of how Wildwood was supposed to work would be more effective in helping the college realize savings and maximize the benefit to the environment. He extended that idea to the larger community he feels part of: “In the long run, I think [Wildwood] will bring people together with common goals. I don't see us as doomed, but

I see us as we make our own fate. If we really want to change, we can do it, but it's not going to happen any time soon. There has to be an incentive for everyone else to work together. It has to be cooperative, communal."

Elly Palmer

Elly Palmer—Biographical Sketch

Elly Palmer is a female full-time student at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. She graduated high school in 2008 and enrolled at Wildwood that fall. She has spent most of her life in west St. Louis County, having moved from the city itself in 1994. Elly describes herself as a "big nature fan" and likes the fact that her hometown of Eureka is so embedded in trees and wilderness. Elly doesn't presently have a major—in fact, in her words, she "doesn't have a plan, but [she] wanted to get involved." Elly notes with optimism that she'll "go wherever Wildwood takes [her]."

Elly reports that she has "never had time for a bunch of activities" in high school. She presently works as a part-time shift leader at a food service chain in Ballwin. She enjoys the fact that the Wildwood campus is so close to her home, and notes that her commute to school is typically 10 minutes or less. Nonetheless, she has a brother who chooses to commute to the Meramec campus, another college in the St. Louis Community College District. At Wildwood, Elly is completing general education requirements and hopes to transfer somewhere for a program in interior design, with a potential emphasis on environmentally friendly practices.

Elly offered that both of her parents have college experience. Her mother attended

Washington University in St. Louis for coursework in physical therapy; her father attended community college.

Elly Palmer—Photo-elicitation and interview

My conversations with Elly were unique among research participants—per some lingering scheduling issues, we weren't able to speak during my time in St. Louis. In fact, our interview didn't happen until several weeks after my visit to Wildwood, and was conducted via telephone. That said, she demonstrated great enthusiasm and a unique understanding of the green features on campus. Elly returned a total of 27 photographs, many of which were taken from a very close range, targeting a specific object or activity at Wildwood. These included palettes of plants on the green roof, the rainwater cisterns, recycling bins, and specific "green" products for sale at the College bookstore. For some of these items, Elly was able to offer a very specific description of the item's function, and how it contributed to the green efforts on campus. For others, she was less certain—mistakenly calling the cisterns "turbines," or wondering aloud about the reasons the green roof might be locked.

During our conversation, Elly described her experience leading up to her time at Wildwood: "Last year was my first year being in college in general. I felt pretty intimidated—I was really nervous and scared, of how it was going to be difficult. I watched this campus get built, and I was really excited, because I knew that I'd be going to school there... When I went to register for classes, I was really impressed with how bright it was, how easy it was on the eyes. To see all these simple shapes used in these

interesting ways. When I walked in, I liked it immediately, and I wasn't disappointed at all when I started classes there." Elly admitted that, though she saw the campus being built, it wasn't until a family member made a comment that she knew Wildwood would be a green building. "I wasn't exactly sure exactly what she meant when she said it was going to be a green campus. I didn't realize how dedicated they were going to be to making it a green campus, with recycling the rainwater, and using the outside air and all the natural light, and solar energy... I guess some people might feel intimidated by all that—not knowing what to expect. But they do such a good job of making it seem average, everyday, normal, just like things in your house. It's very comfortable and I like it there a lot."

Elly remained mostly positive about her experience at Wildwood during our conversation. She repeatedly praised the natural light that is made available through the many windows on campus, and shared: "I really enjoy that, because natural sunlight helps me focus. I think it helps other students focus. It increases (sic) student moods." She made special note that there is "plenty of 'hang out' spots" that students take advantage of, though added that the campus is only busy between 10:00 in the morning and 12:00 noon; "otherwise, it empties out a little bit." Like some of her student colleagues, Elly informed me that the College President has visited one of her classes to gather feedback on their experience to date, which she thought was "really cool." She has also noticed an effect on her overall health: "I've noticed the difference with the air being healthy in there. I tend to feel a lot better whenever I'm there. I've noticed that—I used to

get sick frequently in high school, and not so much in college."

Elly was one of many people to photograph recycling bins on campus, and reported her pleasure at how easy it is to find bins or trash cans all over campus. She remarked: "I always see custodians cleaning, just going around to make sure everything is clean. I know every night they go out to the parking lot to make sure that there's not any litter out there. You can see that the floors are super-shiney. Granted, it's a new campus, but they do a really good job with the upkeep. And I think that also helps a lot to keep kids focused, because they're not all worried about this place being dirty." Elly seemed excited about how these features contribute to students choosing Wildwood—and reported that several of her friends from high school have returned to town to attend Wildwood after a semester at another college. Though she anticipates that many have done so because they "didn't do very well" in classes, or "their parents pulled them back because of money problems," Elly said that she was "glad they picked Wildwood, so I could see them again, and I was glad that they picked a really cool campus." Elly and some of her friends have taken the initiative to carpool to campus, and shared that "a lot of students actually do car pool." Though Elly advised that there aren't any parking problems on campus at present, her peers decided to drive together to "maintain [their] circle of friends" and "take turns to save on gas." She also explained that "the campus didn't really tell [them] to do that—they didn't really mention it at all. It was [their] own idea."

This prompted some discussion about how she has learned about the green

features at Wildwood—she revealed that there have been three major sources of information that have helped her learn. The main source—which Elly cited no less than seven times in our conversation—was Wildwood Campus Police. Elly explained that, while taking photographs for this research, she asked a Campus Police Officer to grant her access to restricted parts of campus, such as the green roof. Elly related that, while together, the officer shared several interesting descriptions of the green features on campus—including about the energy savings realized by insulating the building with plants on the green roof, and how the school used rainwater gathered in cisterns to fill sinks and toilets. Elly indicated that “the officer was very informative. He knew a lot.” Elly also reported learning a lot about the green features from a particular faculty member who teaches Stress Management and also works in the College bookstore. Lastly, Elly was the only research respondent who indicated she had made explicit use of the College's “green kiosk,” a touch-screen computer with recorded audio and video that explains the College's green features, located on the first floor near the front entrance. “I learned a lot from those things—it's only ten minutes long, and it had several interviews with teachers and people who had volunteered around campus. It was really helpful—they pointed out a lot of things to me that I had never even noticed.” When asked if she had observed many people using the kiosk, Elly remarked: “Actually, no. Most of the time they look like they are turned off. When I first started going there, I wasn't even sure if they worked or not. Eventually I asked one of the ladies at the front desk and, sure enough, you just touch it, and they turn on. I've used them, and I've seen a couple of more

adult students use them, but not very many people.” I asked Elly if she thought the lack of use could be attributed to some embarrassment on the part of students, she stated: “Maybe, but I think most of it is that kids my age are in more of a hurry to get to class. Going through the halls they probably don't pay much attention to it.” Elly added that she has considered joining the College's Environmental Club as a means to “learn more about some of the mechanical workings, and see how exactly some of that stuff works. It's interesting to me—not necessarily something that I'd study per se, but to gain some knowledge about my surroundings.”

Elly revealed that the time she has spent at Wildwood has had an effect on her intended career path: “I knew that I wanted to do something with interior decorating or design—Wildwood did give me some inspiration towards an eco-friendly design focus. I didn't realize how much impact some of that stuff has... people don't realize half the time how clean the air is, how natural things are. It's helped me learn about some of the options I'd have in design.” Elly took time to compare her Wildwood experience to her high school, where “there were no windows anywhere. It was hard to focus. It made me feel like I was in a cave, I just wanted to go to sleep. Personally, I enjoy all types of weather—rain, snow, everything. Being able to see that and hear that in the classroom is soothing.”

Despite her positivity, Elly admitted there are challenges at Wildwood, including reduced availability of classes: “I might have to transfer to Meramec to get the classes for what I want to study. Wildwood doesn't have everything I need, but it's a brand new

campus.” Elly also noted some displeasure at the irony of a campus with few plants or trees in or near the building. “The other SLCC campus that I visited was Meramec... I have to say that I was a little bit disappointed in Wildwood because, whenever I went to Meramec, everything was covered in trees, and it was so green outside. A lot of Wildwood campus is paved parking lots.” Elly did add: “But Meramec isn't recycling rainwater, they don't have windows everywhere. They're not an eco-campus like Wildwood is. Wildwood is my favorite school that I've been to, especially the natural light—that's my favorite thing about it.”

Like many people who photographed the College's green roof, Elly couldn't explain why the doors were locked, barring access to the space. “Whenever I have classes on the third floor, I'd see that garden out there—it looks like it would be a cool place to study and enjoy the sun. But they do keep it locked all the time. I'm not sure if that's for safety reasons, or... at first, I wondered if it was just a class project, maybe some horticulture students. The officer didn't really say anything about that—I just assumed the keep it locked for safety and so the kids aren't messing around, stepping on the plants, I guess.” One of the unique things that Elly photographed and made sure to explain was a series of images in the bookstore, documenting paper products for sale that are made of elephant dung. Per Elly, these items “don't smell bad,” though she admits to being “a little afraid to write on it.”

An Illuminating Story from Elly

At the close of our conversation, I asked Elly if her experience at Wildwood has

affected her life off campus. She commented: “The lack of plants around Wildwood has inspired me to make a little garden outside of my house, and put a little planter outside my window. I really do like all the natural colors that nature gives us. Outside to me smells good, looks good—I just like it. My parents can't garden at all, so I took it upon myself to get us some organic lettuce and things like that. Especially with all the little bushels on the roof [at Wildwood], I thought that was neat, so I put a little planter outside my window so I could have the colors and smells from outside, and the oxygen that those plants will give out... The first head of lettuce [that we grew], the rabbits got to before we did. We have used some of the lettuce in the salads we make. My mom is a physical therapist and some of her patients will bring in homegrown cherry tomatoes, or green peppers, or carrots even. I've never bought organic anything from stores, so I had no idea how much better it tastes when it comes straight out of the ground. Especially growing it myself, I thought it was really good. Leafy greens, they're really delicious. I have pet guinea pig who loves it, too.”

Sean Monahan

Sean Monahan—Biographical Sketch

Sean Monahan is a white male student in his late twenties. He has no children and is not married. After graduating high school in 2000, he worked various jobs before moving to Florida and enlisting in the United States Marine Corps. He worked for 10 months as a Recruiter's Assistant before attending Advanced Infantry Camp. At this camp, Sean was injured, resulting in a medical discharge. Sean spent the next years

recovering from his injury; he calls his inability to continue with the Corps "disappointing." After some time, Sean chose to pursue a long-standing interest in the environment and conservation, and began researching educational opportunities that would advance his qualifications in these fields.

The spring semester of 2009 was Sean's first semester in an educational setting since infantry school—which Sean noted was "very different" from the community college setting. Sean described the Wildwood campus as "real classrooms." He chose to enroll part-time, taking 9 credits, given the length of time he spent outside a school setting—though emphasized that his experience at the College to date had been "easy." Sean made special note that he actually lives closer to the Meramec campus of the St. Louis Community College system, though prefers to commute to Wildwood because the campus is a better match for his ideals.

Sean remains on disability benefits from the Military and has no other form of income. Outside of his studies, he serves as President of two clubs at the Wildwood campus—the Environmental Club and the Computer Science Club. He notes that his father had some college experience—making the Dean's List at Kentucky State University—though got a job before he completed a degree.

Sean Monahan——Photo-elicitation and interview

Sean brought a somewhat cynical perspective and often sarcastic sense of humor to our interview. As President of the Environmental Club at Wildwood, and as an aspiring natural resource or conservation scientist, he displayed some of the highest expectations

of all research participants for what Wildwood could be for the community. Sean returned 22 photographs of the campus building and grounds—including unique images of piles of scrap metal, refuse, and stagnant ponds on the further reaches of school property, and pictures of recyclable materials left in trash bins in the building itself. One picture in particular—showcasing a group of abandoned lawnmowers, water heaters, and other scrap metal—Sean called “the official Wildwood green dump.” Though Sean seemed to remain excited about opportunities at Wildwood, he expressed frustration throughout our interview, citing rules and College practices that, in his view, undercut the green idea that Wildwood signifies.

Sean repeatedly remarked that the woods surrounding the Wildwood campus are among its most valuable and unique resources, “because typically, whenever you go to a college, a city community college, you're not going to be going into the woods—you're around businesses and traffic... The most amazing and breathtaking thing about this campus is not this building, or any of this crap, but this land out here. I think this school, since it's a green school, really needs to take advantage of the fact that they have what used to be 100 acres of Missouri conservation land. There's natural springs, there's swamps with frogs and amphibians... tons of wildlife. And they need to exploit all that—I don't want to say exploit, but say 'hey, our campus is built with all this stuff, why don't we offer more naturalist classes.'”

Like many of his fellow participants, Sean took pictures of architectural and lighting features on campus that he described as “open,” and remarked on the “strategic

use” of natural light: “[The classroom views] remind me a lot of how I have my workstation set up in my apartment. I've got my computer right in front of the big window, so I can open it up and get the sunlight, and see what's going on—birds, flowers, it just makes me happy. I'm sure it makes other people happy. It's scientifically proven, apparently.” Sean tempered that positivity with some cynicism about his classmates, and their opinions of the campus: “We don't walk about it. I don't sit next to someone and say 'hey, what do you think of the Wildwood building.' I'm usually asking what we're supposed to be doing in class today. I don't get the impression that they're very impressed. But that's just a passive impression—I haven't asked. It seems like they say 'hey, this is the school that is closest, so that's where I'll go.' As opposed to how I decided—I actually live dramatically closer to the Meramec campus, and I chose to go to this school specifically because of the architecture and the design. Even though it's three or four times as far. In the morning is takes 30 minutes instead of 5 or 10 to Meramec. I just hope it works out.” Cynicism aside, Sean observed that the lighting has led to a trend of students using public spaces on campus for a variety of functions. About one photograph of the student lounge, Sean remarked: “You can see the awesome student lighting. A lot of people use this space. I occasionally do. It's a popular place—kids get together between classes, do homework, talk.”

Sean added some less positive comments about the widespread use of fans and open ceilings for air circulation on campus, reporting that they reminded him of some “horrible industrial thing,” and that he “didn't like it at all.” He also revealed his

displeasure at the standardization of classrooms on campus, and the relative lack of décor in rooms and hallways: “It's all bleak, and hinting of the macabre, it gives you an eerie feeling... Every student you talk to will tell you that this sucks—how am I going to stay awake for a three or four hour lecture class staring at a blank white wall. What's going on? A lot of stuff that is put in pictures, like artwork in classrooms, will help students think, think in ways that will give them ideas. Get your brain cells firing. Whenever I'm at home and I have writers block, all I have to do is look around, I see all kinds of stuff—pictures on the wall, stuff on the end table. But when you're sitting in a class like this, it deadens you.”

Sean captured some of the student commons area, where the College has set up a “one stop shop” for many functions, including tutoring, the library, and registration. I asked Sean if that co-location worked for him, and he responded: “Right now it works for me, because I don't have to do any of that. I don't need to use the library, I don't need to go there to do math tutoring. I don't go there to study. But I'm easily distracted—if I was there and trying to see a math tutor, and there were people there gibbering and playing games, cell phones going off, there's no way I'd be able to concentrate.” I asked Matt what alternatives students had access to—he explained: “They do have study rooms here—just one, the multipurpose room. It's not even really a study room, it's the multipurpose room cut in half. But that's not a problem here, if you need to find a place to study you can find one. Look at this classroom—the doors aren't locked, the only people who come in here are janitors. If a teacher comes in, they just ask you if you're in their

class. It's very casual as far as that goes.”

Sean seemed to think that the College was less “casual” about some of the other projects he and his colleagues have suggested. The Environmental Club has proposed creating trails that wind back into the woods on campus, but that project has been delayed by, in Sean's words, “liability issues.” Another project that would have installed plants around the building was met with some resistance: “When we went to the President, she said... every question imaginable. Whose going to take care of the plants, what kind of plants, how big are the plants, blah blah blah... there was a huge fear that no one would take care of the plants and we'd have dead plants everywhere. They wouldn't even agree to the idea of a community tree." Like many of his fellow participants, Sean made photographs of the College's green roof, from the other side of a locked door: “We don't get to go out there—the doors are always locked. It's a shame—I haven't gotten to go out there at all. I was going to ask a security guard, but... it'd be nice, to be able to go outside and enjoy some fresh air between classes.” Sean summarized his feeling on the restrictions being placed on student initiatives: “It's just stupid that there's red tape and liability when you're going through, cleaning litter, cleaning up campus. They're throwing up barriers. The same complaint that people in politics make—if you want to get something accomplished on a small level, even the Wildwood environmental club, it's just a few of us trying to get something accomplished... You'd think that it would be a little more relaxed at a college because they'd want you to express yourself, open up, and identify who you are.” Barriers aside, Sean appears to have retained his determination to

make a difference in the community at large: “Part of what the Wildwood Environmental Club is going to try and start doing is getting local businesses to go green—like they do downtown, by ordinance. It's the trendy thing—we can totally do it. This is just a brainstorm for next semester. We can get businesses to do it—the YMCA, go green, because they do not recycle anything. We're just gonna square them away. We're just starting to brainstorm on this. Everything is just coming together. I think it will be really awesome.”

Over the course of our interview, Sean reiterated his high expectations for Wildwood, and his frustration with behavior that has let him down: "My major—I'm pretty sure I'm going to go with natural resources and conservation. So that's kind of a green thing. I think that going to a green school has pertinence... or I thought it would have more pertinence, that there would be more programming, a lot more to offer in terms of ecology, naturalism, and environmental classes and stuff. But there isn't. I know it's community college... but I thought there would be a lot more availability, school activities or functions around the environment. If the school goes so far out of its way to be green, to protect the ecosystem, then why doesn't it want to show off the ecosystem that its protecting so much, or guide students in that direction? The sun roof is closed off. They're making us have a meeting with the President and the Chief of Police again so we can build a teeny tiny little trail that goes around the parking lot. Before we can even build our good trail. It doesn't make sense.” He mollified somewhat, admitting that "it could just be because it's essentially a brand new school, and people are settling in. It

takes a long time... even when you move homes, it takes months to settle in. With a school, I guess we're still settling in, and eventually it may be like that. But I don't know." Sean's cynicism about Wildwood is perhaps best exemplified in his answer to my question about why he thinks St. Louis Community Colleges built the Wildwood campus—he answered, simply: “Publicity.”

Sean compared Wildwood to other schools he's been to: “At other schools, it seems like there's a lot more going on. Like at Meramec... there's stuff going on in the halls, in the classrooms. I wasn't a student there, but that's where I went to enroll, and I know people who go to school there. You get a lot more of the feeling that you're on a college campus, and you're part of a community college. It's those details, the little things. The little things that bring the students together and make them feel at home. I don't get that feeling here... After high school, the only schooling experience I had was in the School of Infantry in the Marine Corps. They did have classrooms, and they were stagnant, just like this—nothing going on. This could be described as a military classroom... That's amazing to think about. I actually think they had more stuff—they actually had a plant, and I think there was a couple of pictures in the Marines. The School of Infantry was more decorated than the brand new, trendy West County community college in St. Louis."

Unlike some of his student colleagues, Sean explained that his orientation to the College may have placed too much emphasis on the green features at Wildwood: “That's all they talked about at the new student orientation that I went to. I went in thinking that

I'd hear about what materials I needed, where are my classrooms, what did I expect from class—instead they were like, 'oh, this is our passive light, our natural lighting, here's how we get our heat, here's how the building is green, and all that stuff. That's all they talked about—they gave us a tour of how it's a green building. And that's great, but what about, what do I need to bring to math?" He did report that the orientation was not a mandatory obligation, and indicated that he would like to go back and help with orientation programming, and help bring a more concerted emphasis on student success strategies. "They can both be incorporated—it needs to be. We're discussing that in student government—it needs to be different next time around."

An Illuminating Story from Sean

Towards the end of our conversation, I asked Sean if he had any advice for leaders of community colleges who are considering green buildings. He responded: "Emphasize why it's a green building, and what it's doing. Work around that, instead of just saying, hey, you're in a green building—go to school. Have some sort of focus around that, aside from just media attention. Offer more classes, and use the resources that Wildwood does. Going to a green school, it doesn't matter at all unless you're somehow taught how it's a green and why that's important. Otherwise, they might as well use coal. That's the main point. Students just come here because of geographic convenience. Green schmeen... I'm littering. There's garbage out in the parking lot, trash in the recycling. It needs to become part of the psychology of the school, there needs to be more pride in the school. It needs to be—we're Wildwood, we're the green school. Have pride in that. You don't need to just

go a green school, you need to have a green lifestyle and curriculum, integrate it. It needs to have the green ambiance. Not just the architecture—you can't just have a green building and call it good. Then the only good it does are the tax incentives that the city gets, or PR. No effect on the students whatsoever. There's no outdoor classes, no ecology classes to jump start that interest."

Geoffrey Donald

Geoffrey Donald is a St. Louis native, athlete, and Wildwood student who had volunteered to participate in this research project. After initial discovery and instruction, Geoffrey experienced a death in the family, and declined further participation in data collection.

Faculty Data

Cody Pomeray

Cody Pomeray—biographical sketch

Cody Pomeray is a Professor of Art in the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. A native of Madison, Wisconsin, he moved to Missouri to complete graduate studies in Fine Art at Washington University in St. Louis. He began teaching in 1974 as a “highway teacher,” with adjunct assignments at community colleges and universities all over the St. Louis region. He has been with the St. Louis Community Colleges since 1988, moving into a full-time role in 1995—eventually becoming chair of the Art Department at the Forest Park Campus. Cody has

been with the Wildwood campus since January of 2009, and enjoys assignments in both studio art (with an emphasis on drawing and painting) and art history.

Cody is vocally supportive of the community college, noting that these are colleges where "teaching really takes place. The community college is one of the strongest supporters of the St. Louis arts community." Cody noted that the college contribution to the regional art community has made for a "good ride" in recent years, and is optimistic about the contribution the Wildwood Campus will make to arts in St. Louis in the years to come.

At the outset of data collection, Cody shared very positive feelings for the facilities at the Wildwood Campus, making special note of the fact that, "unlike some other Colleges, the facilities and rooms that the Art Department gets to use were very intentionally designed to be used for art." Cody continues to produce art and shows at galleries across the country, including recent shows in New York, Chicago, and Kansas City.

Cody Pomeray—Photo-elicitation and interview

Cody Pomeray displayed great enthusiasm for contributing to this research and for the Wildwood campus during our conversations. Cody returned a total of nine photographs in two segments: one group that captured a special event planned for his art students, called "Art and Earth: an Earth Day Experience," and another group from the morning kick-off from an Eco-Arts festival hosted by the art department at Wildwood. Though these photographs focused on unique occasions at Wildwood, as opposed to a

typical day in the life of a faculty person, Cody emphasized how this focus highlighted both the potential, and the shortcomings, of the green campus as it relates to his role in teaching and learning at this school.

Cody chose to not use the disposable camera for the reflexive photography portion of this research—noting that the use of these items seemed a contradiction to the philosophy of a green college. Using his own digital camera, Cody captured specific events, and then self-edited his photographs, sending only a portion of the images captured during these two events. Cody noted that this self-editing helped present a focus on the clearest and most compelling images. This behavior may also reflect a certain pride in showing the best of Wildwood, or defensiveness in omitting less compelling images—though Cody's candor during the interview portions of our research served to assuage any fear of incomplete results.

Cody submitted four photographs of the “Earth Day Experience” event. In each of these images, Cody featured a group of students making art outdoors. Some are sitting on the sidewalk, a select few have portable chairs brought by the teacher, and others have borrowed chairs from lounges on campus and brought them outside. All the students in these photographs are White, with the majority being young, female students. They sit facing a treeline, a distant church, and the pond located on campus. Young trees in the foreground are supported by stakes and guylines. During photo elicitation interviews, Cody made no effort to hide a positive attitude about the campus when describing the day: “This is actually Earth Day. We had decided, since it's such a wonderful

surrounding, to celebrate Earth Day outside. As it worked out, we were working on landscape drawings, so this was part of our moving outside for two weeks this Spring... On that day, we saw the first baby chicks of the Spring—mom was taking them out for a swim. So the pond is alive and well, too." After some discussion of the potential in teaching and learning in the outdoor spaces at Wildwood, Cody confessed that "we don't have the facilities we need to teach outside right now. We make do, because artists always do. But I would like to see more outdoor seating available. The College is growing, of course, and we're all discovering the property around us... It would be nice around the lakeside to have some outdoor seating. I think the students would use it. It would certainly be valuable to us [in the art program]."

Cody captured the same group of students in a group of five photographs from the Eco-Arts festival kick-off. Here, students use chalk to decorate school sidewalks with various environmental imagery—including a recycling symbol, sun and wind icons, and an ear of corn with a gasoline pump hose and nozzle attached. Of these photographs, Cody noted the preparation of the themes for the chalk drawings was a collaborative effort, happening in class the week previous. Cody estimated that about 350 people attended the festival, with a crop of invited commercial vendors who were "very busy all day." Cody offered: "Probably the highlight of the day was the high school art student awards ceremony—we had 75 to 85 people packed in to the multipurpose room... students were award ribbons and awards, and the parents and families were there." Cody agreed that the festival was one of the early efforts made by Wildwood to reach out to

area high schools and build a P-20 pipeline in West County. He noted: “We want the high schools to feel a connection [to Wildwood], and be thinking about how we can partner with them even more.”

Cody took note of how the community interacted with the new green campus on the day of the festival. “A lot of people commented on the building. For a lot of people, this was their first time on campus. One thing is for sure—we don't want to be the best kept secret in West County. We had a lot of press people here—newspapers and Internet, especially—so that part was very successful... but a lot of folks, even with the press we had, said 'what is this?' and 'I didn't hear anything about this.' A lot of people had not heard about it.” Cody emphasized that this feedback will not go unnoticed. He suggested that Wildwood stakeholders are negotiating many unique situations on campus, given their new and particular surroundings. Regarding some of the ebbs and flows in attracting people to festival events, Cody commented: “These were new waters. We aren't going to be too hard on ourselves. There are things we learned, and things we'll be working on, of course.” Of note, Cody only offered one comment on the college administration and its relationship to this event: “By Sunday, all the chalk had washed off the concrete, and the President was very pleased with that. She was very happy that everything got cleaned up very quickly.”

During our interview, Cody emphasized that he was relatively new to campus—only having joined the staff in the spring 2009 semester, and was “just now getting used to the building.” That said, Cody admitted being a key player in the discussions about

Wildwood in the years leading up to the construction of the campus—he had been brought in on conversations about program planning and the artistic elements of Wildwood. Though he did know something about the building before arriving, he was surprised by "how very, very small" the College is—though qualified that description by emphasizing "how close and committed everyone is [at Wildwood.]" His comments continued: "Everyone is very proud that it is a green campus. They talk about recycling all the time... It is on their minds—they not only take it very seriously, but they want to build and spread throughout the whole community here." He described Wildwood as a "healthy, clean environment," and admitted that the green idea has made its way into his own teaching—since joining Wildwood, Cody has begun making assignments with ecology or the environment as a focus, and has committed to using environmentally friendly materials in his classroom, as opposed to mineral spirits or other harsh chemicals. Cody explained that the emphasis on being healthy and clean has a downside, however: "It is just to clean for me. It's just to clean for an artist and an art student. The floors, walls, even the studio spaces, are too clean... It's a bit inhibiting. Students feel that they are going to mess up the room. If they get messy, they are somehow going to damage the walls or floors, and they will. The short of it is, is that we are in a messy business. We make messes, and we are filled with charcoal... No one has ever told me that I can't mess it up, and I'm probably going to, but I'm still green and feeling my way through here."

Cody seems to have discovered that his relatively short tenure on campus is in

sync with the relative youth of the campus: “For the past 2 years on this campus, most of the things that have been going on are the first time that the college has done this. There are some growing pains involved of course, but you develop a pretty good idea of what you would do different and do it better next time, and celebrate those things that are successful.” He did admit some room to advance how new students and staff are welcomed to campus: “There was probably a lot of [orientation activity] in the first year. Since I'm one of the few that came in the second years, I have not heard of anything going on like that. My interest is there... [College administration] does have these open sessions for staff and students. It's an opportunity for the students and staff to ask anything. Attendance has not been terrific lately.”

Cody noted with no shortage of enthusiasm his appreciation for the level of technology on campus. Comparing his experience at Wildwood to other St. Louis Community Colleges, he noted that “they haven't quite caught up to the standards here. The tech level here is just amazing—as a matter of fact, it is far out beyond what I normally teach in. I've had to accommodate my lectures and my teaching to a new technology than what I've been used to for the last 40 years.” There is a stress that is associated with this new technology—Cody noted that he has had to “rebuild everything” he does in class around the new tools, though notes that workshops have been made available and “tech support was great.” Cody noted that this network of support pervades the campus culture. In fact, Cody described a staff that seems tremendously committed to the Wildwood idea: “Most everyone that came here, came here the first day the doors

opened two years ago. They have a real ownership in the building, in making it work. They were standing there when the first students walked through the door a couple of years ago... It gives them a feeling of ownership. Everyone from the housekeeping people, to the bookstore people, to the admissions folks, to the faculty, the administration—they all couldn't do enough for you. Our college president is in and out of our offices a couple of times a month, just seeing how you are doing... She will sit and talk for a while—she is very supportive."

When asked about his involvement in the planning efforts for future buildings on the Wildwood Campus, Cody commented positively: "Here's where I'm going to applaud [the President]. She has had every single one of the full-time faculty members in her office for an hour or so... She sets aside a time to talk with everyone in the building about what they would like to see in Phase II... When we went through Phase I, she just had her entire life with meeting with people and asking them about what would make this the perfect spot for you." Cody informed me that the difficult economic times are on the minds of faculty and staff as the College deliberates on expansion, though the conversation seems to be occurring among a smaller group: "Around the dean and administrator levels, that is the primary topic... I'm not involved with it so I can't offer much. I watch and see how we are going to be funded—are we going to take big budget cuts from the state? Are we going to able to raise tuition, or are we going to have a tuition freeze? There is this back and forth kind of thing and how you balance that. It's hard. The future of the next building is going to be based on that for sure."

Cody noted that the West Campus location made for some interesting opportunities to connect with the community in unique ways. “I think it is but 15,000 people live out here. Comparatively speaking, it is a rural environment to me... Because of the affluence in this area, there is not only an acceptance of visual art, there is a need, a want for more... Both the President and I share the vision that this campus could be a visual and performing arts hub for this community out here.” Beyond art, Cody encouraged me to think about social responsibility as a core part of teaching and learning: “I think the whole concept of green and the whole concept for being responsible for the planet is something that is now part of our culture. It is on their minds in their family homes—it is on their minds in high schools—it is a topic of discussion on the nightly news—it is part of the whole fabric of the culture now. The more you bring that to the campus here, the more the students have buy in and the more familiar they are with it, and the more they feel that they are participating in that whole process. Spinning learning around responsibility, I think is a must.”

An Illuminating Story from Cody

During our interview, Cody described a creative response he has created in response to the limitations of space at Wildwood. He observed: “Most of the departments that I’ve taught in have had 5-6 studio spaces, entire studios set aside for ceramics alone, photography would have their own space, graphic communication would have their own space... [At Wildwood] we have just one art room and a storage room. It limits what we can offer at this particular point to just pretty basic two dimensional drawing—design

classes, figure drawing classes—things like that. It has also encouraged me to be more creative about space, which I'm usually pretty good at—I've had to really think about ways of developing course in other ways. What I've done for the fall semester, I've overhauled the entire schedule. Instead of offering drawing 1 and 2, I'm offering drawing 1, 2, 3, and advanced all at the same time. I've taught them all at the same time before and it's a bit tricky. You are keeping 4 lesson plans going at the same time... Students are very happy about that—they are at the point now that they have been here for two years—they are making plans to go to Meramec next year because we didn't offer the advanced classes here. We are going to be able to keep them now. They want to stay here—they are close to their homes and they want to stay here... It has really encouraged me to focus creatively on what I can make happen here when there is no space, no money, and no students. You tell an artist, I don't have any students, no facility, do you want the job, and they say yes—it's a lot of fun. It really does encourage all of use to think creatively, think openly, no idea is a bad idea." When I asked Cody to talk about what affect this combination of classes has had on students, he added: "It shows beginning students what the advanced students are doing. This is what you will be doing next semester—this is what you will be doing 2 semesters from now. It captures them. You are almost saying to them that of course they will be here next semester and the following semester because this is the track you are on. The second really important part of that is that the students get more of an enriching experience than they would in their regular classes because students learn as much or even more from each other than they do

from me."

Joanna Dawson

Joanna Dawson—Biographical Sketch

Joanna Dawson is full-time Faculty and Chair of the Mathematics and Communications Departments at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. Joanna is relatively new to the district, having been brought on two years ago to help organize the instructional offerings at the Wildwood Campus. A St. Louis native, Joanna "always wanted to get involved with the community college." After completing a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Mathematics, Joanna served as a full-time, non-tenure-track lecturer in the Math Department at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. For the seven years she worked at SIU, she commuted 50 miles each way, three days a week, to meet with her students.

Joanna noted that her experience in helping to organize the Wildwood Campus was very unique. Since the College launched with only five full-time faculty, she was engaged on nearly every level of College operations—from textbook purchases to the hiring of part-time faculty. Before the Wildwood campus opened, Joanna had contributed to the College's effort in hiring over 100 part-time faculty.

Joanna learned that her role at the Wildwood Campus would include the Communications division on the day she interviewed for the job. She praised the hard work and good example set by colleagues at the Wildwood Campus when tackling the

challenges of serving as Chair for two instructional divisions.

Joanna Dawson—Photo-elicitation and interview

Joanna brought good humor and great candor to our interview sessions. She stressed that she likes being at Wildwood, though revealed that “it's a bit crazy,” and urges the College to bring more staff to the College team. Joanna's photographs could best be described as a series of still lives on campus—ranging from office spaces to classrooms. Joanna indicated that she chose to photograph on a Friday, when there were fewer people on campus. Though people were absent in her images, Joanna stressed that students do “hang out” in the common spaces provided. Throughout our discussion of her photographs, she commented on the windows and light quality at Wildwood: “The place has a nice and airy feeling, which I like.” This prompted some comparison to places Joanna had worked previously—some of which she described as a “dungeon.” “I was in a little bitty office with no windows. I would go the whole day and not see outside, which was not good. Here, I may not get outside, but I can see it... It is very nice not only being green but new, and everything works. It has been an incredible experience.”

Joanna photographed some of the classrooms she uses when teaching, and remarked on one unique challenge on a campus with so many windows: it is nearly impossible to find a dark space. “Being in communications, I also have a film class—film appreciation—so they wanted it darker. They have moved three times now, because I put them in one room, and then they would go scout during the day and find a little bit darker room... it depended on the time of day. Looking for dark is a problem. They finally did

find something that worked." Joanna was also one of several people to create images of the recycling system on campus. She recalled with amusement: "One of the art classes went around and pulled [recyclable materials] out of the trash and made a big collage type thing." She noted that she thinks the majority of students use the recycling bins on campus—and observed that one student group has recently labeled all trash cans on campus with stickers bearing the word "Landfill."

Joanna also captured several images that went unnoticed by other photographers participating in this research, including images of dead flies, and a photograph of cleaning products in the faculty break room. Starting with the flies, Joanna noted: "Bugs are a problem. The problem we had once they got in—you can't spray them. What do you do? We are a green building—you can't call an exterminator. We had a big, big, big fly issue. I even went upstairs one time—we had artwork hanging upstairs. A couple of students had done dead fly art. People would clean but the flies would be dropping all the time... You can't just go spray it. We are not supposed to bring [cleansers from outside]." She added her appreciation for the dishwasher in the faculty lounge, "which is nice to encourage us to use regular dishes. The soap—we had a hard time finding dishwasher soap at a place where they could purchase it. It has to be done through purchasing. Everything is supposed to be green. I did take a picture of Palmolive, which we are not supposed to be using. We are working on it." Additionally, while Joanna was one of several people to make an image of the green roof on campus, she admitted that she hasn't been out there since early visits while the campus was under construction.

Joanna had the unique opportunity to be part of the Wildwood team from its very beginnings—actually working with the small core group who would become the College's top administrators at the former West Campus Center. Comparing Wildwood to this former location, Joanna revealed: “It was old, smelly, musty... it used to be a dairy barn, and that was where they were holding classes. The floors [at Wildwood] are cleaner here than in my house.” She offered further comments about her new office space: “It is nice having a view. I've never had a window before. It is very nice having light.” She did reveal some concern, however, regarding how faculty are “on top of each other,” and the issues that this creates: “There are a lot of times when you need private conversations, and there is no privacy in this place. That is difficult... You don't want to reprimand faculty in front of other faculty members—or students come in with complaints. There are times you want to have conversations that you don't want to be around other people, and that is hard to do. We only have the one conference room upstairs, and that is in use a lot... I find myself walking the halls to get privacy with someone.” To date, it sounded like Phase II would be a similar story: “It was said that they would like to hear ideas for Phase II, but individual faculty offices are out of the question. We are hoping to change that but it is not sounding like it. If we can't do that, I'd like to have at least more shared private space.” Joanna observed a similar problem for students, who often have to deal with multiple College functions sharing the same space, such as testing, registration, and tutoring. Perhaps the biggest complication arises out of the competing need for students to work together: “You draw a fine line because you want students to work together and

collaborate on different items... At the same time, we need a quiet space for people to study—it's hard to bring that together." Joanna also recommended that things like a cafeteria and athletics—both currently absent at Wildwood—be considered for Phase II.

During the process of construction, Joanna was able to tour the building in process, and noted: "You would talk to the construction people and they would show you how they were recycling everything they were using. Even when they were painting or putting in the carpet. Even during those construction times when it was new, you didn't have that chemical smell. I was having a house built at the same time and I know what those smells are." She revealed that these visits formed the bulk of her orientation to the campus. She noted that there is no formal student orientation to the green building that she is aware of. Students have the opportunity to take a tour of the building during an orientation program, though that experience is not mandatory. Per Joanna, "there is nothing I know of that hits all the students." She expressed some concern about advancing a more aggressive orientation program: "We are so packed—if you take a 30-minute span out of a class, then you have to change the finals because we couldn't cover something. That is how it is—I wish it wasn't."

Joanna described the opportunity to come to Wildwood as "a blank slate," with unique challenges and opportunities. Her role as chair for two departments prompted comment, especially her role with the Communications department: "It's not my field, and there are some issues coming up in communications right now... I feel a bit strange about making these decisions at first, or I felt strange, but I just have to talk to the people

that do it.” Joanna observed that the problem may be exacerbated by the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty: “We only have [five] full time, and about 100 adjuncts, maybe a few more.” Joanna echoed comments made by other respondents, noting how their Wildwood experience has forced some creativity and need to reinvent themselves: “When I applied for the job, I thought I was applying for math faculty. That just gives you an idea of how crazy the whole thing went. Then I found out it was for one of five full-time faculty. Then I found that I was going to be math faculty and that I was going to chair the department, and chairing communications also.” As such, the green qualities of the campus weren't at the “top of [Joanna's] list” in the early going, but she admitted to being “very pleased” upon discovering the green features.

Joanna commented several times on health-related issues and the green campus. Early in our conversations, Joanna revealed that she “loves” the no smoking policies on campus: “You go to other campuses and by the time you walk from one building to the next, you already smell like smoke... I think back to the days [when they smoked in the hallways] and it just blows my mind that they actually did that. At [a previous College where I worked], the draft came through—they would smoke outside but it would come right into our offices and get trapped by the doors. At certain times of the year the wind would bring it right in.” Additionally, Joanna revealed that, compared to previous Colleges, “there is a nice airflow. I don't know if it has anything to do with it, but I haven't gotten sick as much since I've gotten here. I haven't had a cold this year. I've always gotten sick around finals time—I don't know if it's the stress, plus you are around

a lot of students and they are coming in your room with the flu or with colds and asking questions."

An Illuminating Story from Joanna

Joanna made comments about how the green qualities have had a tendency to make Wildwood facilities less flexible than other campuses she has experienced. In her words, "we have had a few issues—the fact that the ways the ceilings and walls are set up, you don't have some of the mobility you would have in other spaces... once a space is planned, especially with the fixed walls, you can't just throw up a wall to solve a problem. [The airflow] is neat but, when you want to change things, you can't just change them." There does seem to be a solution realized in some of the Wildwood facilities—namely the College's multipurpose room, complete with accordion doors. "It was designed where it can be one large space or you can break it up and use it... This room is used for all sorts of things. If the space has been designed one way, you can't just put up a wall, but if you know ahead of time what you want to do, you could design things to be used for multiple purposes as long as you think of it ahead of time. You just can't do it afterwards." Joanna confirmed that the multipurpose room "is the biggest space we have. We are getting to have enough people that we are going to need a bigger space." She urged community college leaders to plan ahead, and remember that things "can't be changed and flipped around... Once you commit to your space, you are pretty well fixed. There is not much you can do with the whole—anytime we want to do something different, we hear that we can't do it, because it messes with the airflow, or [another green

quality of the building].”

Kenneth Wood

Kenneth Wood—Biographical Sketch

Kenneth Wood is Professor of Accounting and Division Chair of Business and Information Technology at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. Kenneth has been in higher education for over twenty years, after a successful run in the private sector developing start-up companies. He spent twelve years as Department Chair of Accounting at a private university in St. Louis before moving to a regional university in Oklahoma. After three years as a Department Chair in Oklahoma, Kenneth made the transition to community colleges, returning to St. Louis for assignments across the St. Louis Community College District. He spent a year at the Florissant Valley Campus before joining the team at Wildwood.

Kenneth serves as mentor to the Phi Theta Kappa and Honors Education programs at the Wildwood Campus. He emphasized that “[he] enjoys what he does very much, and couldn’t imagine doing anything else.”

Kenneth noted that the emerging emphasis on “environmental accounting” has intersected in interesting ways with the work he does at STLCC—Wildwood. Considerations such as disposal, end-of-life, and other unique concerns are part of new discussions about what costs might be considered at the outset of projects in higher education and other disciplines. Kenneth has a Bachelor’s from the University of Missouri, an MBA from Lindenwood University (MO), and three professional

certifications (CPA, CFM, and CMA).

Kenneth Wood——Photo-elicitation and interview

Kenneth Wood prefaced his description of photographs taken for this research by stating his interest in making images “when the building was quiet,” towards an “idea of space” that faculty and students experience at the Wildwood campus. His photographs might be classified in to two groups—one group of images captured in a live classroom setting, and another of various rooms on campus, including the faculty common room, student lounge and meeting spaces, and the campus' main staircase. The students found in the classroom setting are mostly male, all White, and appear to be in their 20s. About the effect these green spaces have on the teaching and learning that goes on in the classroom, Kenneth commented: “I don't think it makes a difference. I think it is still back to what is going on in the space... I'm not sure [the green qualities of the classroom] is a positive, but at the same time it is not a detriment.” Though he hesitates to assign a positive effect on teaching and learning, Kenneth did use more affirmative descriptions of the campus features in general: “The architecture, which allows for the circulation, you've got the fans, and then you have the special lighting. Those are positive types of things.” We returned to the subject later, when Kenneth reiterated: “I'm the same teacher as I was anywhere else—the space did not matter to me. I did notice making it nicer—the carpeted floors and things like that. Am I a better teacher because of the green building? I don't think so. I can't attribute it to that. Maybe I am, but I just don't realize it.”

Throughout our discussion of his photographs, Kenneth highlighted the “open”

qualities of the Wildwood campus—using that specific descriptor no less than 15 times in our conversation, often combined with notes on cleanliness, or how “well-appointed” the campus is. “That is what this building is about,” said Kenneth, though he clarified that “I don't think [the openness] contributes that I can sense positively, but it may help to keep down the negative feelings.” If nothing else, Kenneth emphasized that the open qualities of the building “gives a sense of being integrated—that we are not just inside, it's a shared space.”

Kenneth said that Wildwood is “much different” than other colleges he's worked at and visited. He appreciated that students have been given the opportunity to “one-stop-shop” for a wide range of school functions, including the library, checking out computers, and paying tuition bills. He reported that he has gotten significant positive feedback on this co-location of campus services, giving credit to the “open” campus architecture for the role they play in these opportunities.

Kenneth brought a sensitivity to cost-benefit relationships when thinking about choices that the College has made in designing and executing the Wildwood campus. Further below, a story is shared that relates Kenneth's experience in Wildwood's relatively small Faculty space—though he tempered those concerns with cool appraisal: “It has to do with constraints—are you going to build classrooms or faculty offices? Classrooms generate revenue—faculty offices just don't.” In our interview, Kenneth described his approach of “environmental accounting” when considering the decisions made at Wildwood. He appreciated that the green qualities of the building mean that there will be

more resources that can be focused on educating students. “I don't want to be spending a lot of resources having to keep up an ancient campus that I could be using on the students. Overall, in the long run, we would have been better to have a facility like this and then having the resources to benefit our students.” He stopped short, however, of trying to integrate the green idea into his own teaching: “There have been comments on how to integrate green thinking into our curriculum. How do we integrate that in to elementary courses of the community college in a way that I'm adding and not subtracting? They could get this at a higher level. It's a trade off.”

Before Wildwood, Kenneth “had never been in a green building.” A resident of the Wildwood community, Kenneth watched the buildings being built, but was not part of any planning processes. He explained: “I knew it would be fresh but I was not sure what the architecture would be... I just came with an open mind... I didn't know what a green building meant other than energy efficient. Actually just seeing the architecture, the reason the ceilings are open, why you have the fans, the existence of the cisterns—I didn't know about that. It's all making sense—it is an old idea. We used to put rain barrels under a downspout to collect that. What was old is new again.” Kenneth advanced this “old is new” idea with some reflections on a recent trip: “I was in California over spring break, going back to buy buildings that were probably built in the late 50's or early 60's, the type that I remember when I was in school. They had very tall windows, very wide, very open—same idea that exists here, so it shows how things haven't really changed in a way.”

When asked about opportunities he has had to learn about the green features at Wildwood, Kenneth offered: “There is a kiosk right out here in the hallway, so if you want to get the real skinny on it, you can look out there. There has been an orientation when I came to this campus, and then the President explains the campus idea to all tour groups that come in here.” He noted that planning for future phases of the campus are in the “preliminary” stages: “we are not there yet—it is still several years out there.” That said, Kenneth credits Wildwood's President for conducting early conversations with stakeholders “on a number of levels.”

Kenneth also commented on the complicated nature of Wildwood as both a green and new campus: “Everything here is clean, fresh, brand new. That has an effect. It's not just the space being clean and bright—it's the attitude of the individuals. The processes within the space are new even though they may be adopted or adapted from other areas. There are still things going on here that are new and different. The building helps reflect that. When you are in an older space like I was, it tended to reflect the older, more established nature of the institution. It had its charms... The building, itself, was a standard 60-year-old stone block building. Nice for their time, but not this.”

Kenneth continued to describe the feeling that the Wildwood community is “making this up as they go,” noting that “that is not a negative thing.” Kenneth seemed to revel in the unique opportunity to be part of the campus history—to participate in so many of campus firsts. He added: “we as faculty are wrestling with traditional viewpoints of things—we are wondering how to think about things differently... We are going to

establish the traditions that will grow out of this campus... It is always new and everything is in front of us. We don't have to carry as much of the baggage or history as we go. We are making history." When asked if the staff assembled at Wildwood seems well-prepared to make history, he responded in the affirmative: "The people that are not comfortable being on the edge and taking risks are not comfortable here and tend to leave, I believe. I was entrepreneur, I started a business. Being part of new and making it up as you go, that is a part of my heritage and part of my history, personally... A person who is not comfortable doing that isn't going to be happy here. A person who wants to already have the traditions, rules and policies in place to support them, is not going to be happy having to think about those and integrate those as they go... I find it liberating."

I asked Kenneth if he thought his life outside of Wildwood had changed because of his time on campus, to which he responded: "Yes—I would say so. I'm aware we are in a green building—I'm aware of its benefits and shortcomings. I'm aware of my activities here as to being careful of using resources and things. That bleeds in to other things. I'm also experiencing working in a green building when others aren't. That informs me well. I think I have a better understanding—I'm more aware of it."

An Illuminating Story from Kenneth

Regarding the office space he has been given to perform his duties when outside of the classroom, Kenneth had this to say: "It is a limited amount of space—I share my offices with another chair. We have her activities and my activities going on at the same time, and that can be exciting at times, but it can also be frustrating and

counterproductive... In today's environment, with the cost per square foot, I understand that it is impossible to have private offices, but sometimes, someplace where there could just be quiet—both for when you have to really deal with some bigger questions, where it takes some concentration. There are times when you can go into a conference room with a student—you can sometimes remove to another space for discussion—but there are other times where you need your own quiet space. That is difficult. This is the first place I've been—I've been lucky and I've had that space wherever I was at other institutions. It is different... Part of me understands it from a cost constraint effort, but the other part of me also has to think about it from a productivity perspective. Am I being as productive as I can be given the nature of the space that I'm occupying?" When asked if there are particular tasks that are harder to do in this office arrangement, Kenneth replied: "Yes—chair tasks. It is easier when you have another chair, but again, there are things I'm trying to take care of in my area and she is trying to take care of her area, and we've got all these noises and sounds going on, which makes it difficult to concentrate." Kenneth agreed that it seemed that Wildwood had chosen to emphasize certain functions at the expense of others, made manifest in the square footage assigned to each.

Barbara Lipp

Barbara Lipp—biographical sketch

Barbara Lipp is an Adjunct Instructor of Reading at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. In interviews, she has offered that she "wanted to be a teacher as soon as [she] hit the dirt running." A speedy student, Barbara finished her undergraduate degree

in two years and eight months, and started teaching before she was old enough to vote. She has been teaching for over 40 years. In her early career, she spent time as a substitute teacher, a reading specialist in public schools, and as a Title I program officer.

Barbara received her Master's from the University of Missouri- St. Louis, and started complementing her work in public schools with teaching assignments at the college level. She retired in 2000 from the school system in Jefferson County, Missouri, and was retired eight days before receiving a call to interview at St. Louis Community College. She has taught at taught for the St. Louis District every semester since, and has had assignments at the Meramec, Forest Park, and Wildwood Campuses.

Barbara was passionate about the role community colleges play in teaching reading to adults, and emphasized the need to respond to individual student needs in instruction. She cited Malcolm Knowles as a significant influence on her development as an adult educator. Among her many professional accomplishments, she was especially proud of her record as an enabler of students otherwise forgotten; Barbara reported that no public school student entering her developmental reading program needed more than two years under her tutelage before rejoining traditional reading programs. Several of her developmental reading students have gone on to become valedictorians upon high school graduation.

Barbara Lipp—photo-elicitation and interview

Barbara brought a reflective nature to our interviews, and called upon her decades of teaching experience to inform our conversation. Barbara is a true believer in the

community college idea—having sent all of her children to community colleges, and having been a community college student herself. She returned 17 photographs in total, including pictures of students in her classroom and in social spaces on campus, and images of unique campus facilities such as the green roof and a shower/locker area designated for people who have ridden bicycles to the College. She admitted that she had an “open mind” and “absolutely no idea” about what Wildwood would be like before arriving. Though she had heard it was a green campus, she “didn't know what they meant by green building.” She added: “I thought that we'd do a lot of recycling, which we do. But I didn't realize about the lights, the air, the environment. I didn't realize that it incorporated so much. The green roof—I didn't know it would incorporate all those issues. It's been wonderful to learn about. I love working out here. When I go to the other campuses, people will ask me how I like it at Wildwood. I get the sense that other people are interested in coming out here, simply because it's clean.”

Several of her images included—albeit incidentally—the many recycling bins on campus, which she describes as being “everywhere.” She seemed confident that the students were using these bins diligently: “The paper, the plastic, the aluminum is all recycled. We don't throw any of that stuff away. It has to be real trash. I'm a recycler, and they're already recycling at home, so they're accustomed to it. It keeps the landfill empty... They really push it here.”

An area resident, Barbara noted that she takes a Yoga class on Wildwood on Mondays, and has found entire groups of people from her subdivision who have

discovered what Wildwood has to offer. She agreed that Wildwood has, in a short amount of time, become a great community resource. Barbara noted that she has noticed students and community members using campus facilities to stay healthy: “What's neat is that people will use the parking lot, the driveways. The kids in the afternoon will walk. [The College] really pushes the health. They try to encourage students to have a healthy mind, healthy body, healthy atmosphere. Programs are organized informally. The staff and faculty will join them, too.”

Barbara made special note of some of the small things that Wildwood has done to make the campus work for faculty and staff. Though its lack of windows make it akin to a “private cave,” Barbara admitted her pleasure at the Wildwood faculty lounge: “That's the nicest faculty lounge I've been in my 46 years of teaching. They've got a dishwasher—that's unheard of. It came with all those pieces of equipment. In all faculty lounges I've ever been in, teachers have had to chip in to buy a microwave, a coffee pot, a refrigerator. But the campus had it all there. Nice lounge equipment—sofas, telephone. I just thought that was unheard of. So not only are the students taken care of, the faculty are taken care of. And they make you feel comfortable.”

Unfortunately, not all of the Wildwood facilities earn such praise—Barbara called the campus library “pathetic,” and advised that she has noticed the effect of the small collection in her classes: “I teach reading—what I like to do is have my students find textbooks and get the feel for a textbook—the feel, the smell. It makes a connection. I tell them to research certain subjects and find authors—what they've written, and write a

synopsis of what they've read. I can't do that here, because there's not enough options. They use the St. Louis Public Libraries. Or they go to Meramec." She did explain that "the county libraries are wonderful," and have welcomed her students when given projects that require research.

Barbara explained that some of the more positive qualities of campus—including the open design—have had a noticeable effect on student behavior: "I've noticed that they tutor each other, informally. It's very social. I think the building promotes that, itself. It's so friendly. At other campuses, I see a social line—this group doesn't want to associate with that group. Especially students with academic disabilities—at other campuses they tend to be ostracized, because they're really not good help, and you don't want to spend your time with someone who's not going to help you. Here, it's 'yeah, come on over here, we'll show you.' I don't know how the building intersects with that, but it's open, it's friendly, it's clean. It's a psychological thing. It could be an attitudinal thing—because of those qualities, people are in a more positive frame of mind when they're on campus." The building has had some shortcomings that Barbara has had to learn to negotiate—including the shutter controls in classrooms: "They only recently installed the plastic shutter controls—originally, you had to climb up there. I'm not going to go up there, and I'm not going to ask my students to go up there, either. That's a potential legal issue. So, they put holes in and dropped them down so we could use them."

Barbara reiterated some of the comments about space made by other faculty at Wildwood. Regarding the arrangement of office and working spaces, Barbara offered:

“The faculty space is set up so the adjuncts are in the center, and the full-timers are in the surrounding offices. That has its positives and its negatives. When there are a lot of adjuncts trying to use the space, there is limited space, a limited number of computers. There's only one copy machine. The full-time faculty forget that their voice carries when their door is open. So what should be considered private is not. Since we're all in tune to that, we know that things aren't supposed to be heard, and we keep it private. We try and keep it not a gossip type issue. One gal, when she hears a conversation going on, she'll just get up and join in. But the majority of us try not to do that.” This concern was tempered somewhat, during a conversation of other communal facilities, such as the faculty lounge: "Faculty are here at different times, on different days. The support staff are in there, too, and it's enough space for everybody. It's noisy during lunch, but you get to visit. You have to have friends. What's nice is there is no line between a secretary and a teacher. At least the adjunct faculty. We have one or two full-time faculty who have their nose in the air, but for the most part, it's very communal." She agreed with reports that finding privacy on campus can sometime be an issue, given the open floor plans: "Sometimes, I've chosen to sit in the student lounge area to get some work done—but I couldn't do any work because the students would come up and talk to me. They'd ask me what I was doing; they'd ask me how they did on their paper."

For an adjunct professor, Barbara seemed very well-informed about future plans for the Wildwood campus. When discussing some photographs of the College grounds, Barbara outlined where she believed the gymnasium and library will eventually be

located. She added: “We bought 63 additional acres—the landowners didn't know that this is going to be the biggest campus of St. Louis Community College. This building is going to be the Mathematics building. Just math only... You will actually probably have to drive a car from one end of campus to another. Or have a shuttle service, or ride a bike. We have showers in this building, to accommodate those people who ride bikes.”

Barbara anticipated that “the physical act of getting students to campus” will be an issue in the future, given some of the legal challenges the College has experienced while developing the campus: “This is a community that is really involved—they're concerned about the school district, they're concerned about what their property looks like. There was a proposal to connect two highways here, and it would have gone through the forest, and there was a response—people thought it was unbelievable. In the end, no highway. Because these people will hire an attorney [without hesitation.] They had four attorneys versus MoDOTs one or two. They had all their ducks in a row.” I asked Barbara what she knew about the planning conversations for Phases II and III at Wildwood: “It's not existent. We know it's going to be a while before phase II and phase III. We know we're limited with space. The community itself is going to take on responsibility for tax dollars—though West County is not inclined to give a lot of money. They want to pay as little tax as possible. It will come eventually, but I don't see it. I will probably be retired and long gone by then.”

For all her insight, Barbara did confess: “I have no privilege to any of the planning processes—that's privileged information, and just not discussed. I just get it in

bits and pieces.” She did reveal that some things on campus remain a mystery—including the College's green roof: “It's locked. You can't get out there right now if you wanted to. The plan is for that to be a patio, but it's still in the development stage. There is a path for the gardeners to check the plants. I'm not sure what kind of plants they are.”

Barbara and I discussed how she learned about the College's green features—she explained that she was able to take part in a two-day orientation to campus when it first opened. “We did an open house on the first of August, and classes started in late August. We took tours, and met with our department chairs. We met with the College President and all the full-time faculty—at the time, there were only four full-time faculty. They addressed what it was that they were trying to do. The introduction was nice.” She added that she might enjoy further opportunities to learn about the campus: “I would kind of like to go to the back rooms and see what's going on there. But it's probably just a bunch of machinery. Like the heating room, the air conditioning rooms. I'd like to see how they're all put together, just to satisfy my own curiosity. I'd like to see how some of the internal systems come together.” She cited that, per safety concerns, she hasn't been able to do so yet without breaking College rules.

Barbara revealed that, for all its positive qualities, Wildwood experiences its fair share of challenges when working with students: “This is the first time I've ever had this happen—parents will enroll students, drive them here, and drop them off. And they may or may not come to class, but they are out of their parents' hair... I have two students in my class right now who failed last semester. One, because he didn't want to be here. He

considers himself a pro golfer, and wants to transfer on a golf scholarship. But with two F's on his transcript, it’s going to be hard. And there's no connection in his mind that those grades are going to have an affect... The other one is a woman, who is not interested in academics—she's interested in babies. That's her goal... You're not ever going to get away from students having trouble. That's going to happen anywhere.”

An Illuminating Story from Barbara

I asked Barbara to compare Wildwood to other colleges she has been part of as a teacher or student. She responded with a description of how Wildwood has given her a freedom she hadn't been able to realize on other campuses: “Meramec is highly structured. This is more loose... There are more opportunities here. My department chair is always interested in our input. We have a meeting scheduled on May 3rd—we're going to have breakfast and get paid to discuss what we think the department needs. What would help the department, what have we observed that has hindered. They don't do that at the other campuses. It's not the first time we've done this—we've done that every semester so far. To have that input, and to be listened to, it's wonderful. Where Meramec was structured—they have their plan, and you have to fit to that plan. I had a hard time fitting the plan, because I saw that it wasn't addressing some students' needs. So when I made a few changes in the curriculum and in the approach, I got in trouble, because they had a designed plan. They expected all their teachers to conform to that plan.” Barbara expressed considerable enthusiasm for exploring pedagogies for adult learners in her classroom, and displayed great excitement when recounting classroom stories about

playing games, and using self-directed learning techniques. She admitted that this comparison meant some unfortunate consequences for students on other campuses, as well: “Definitely administration and faculty are in charge and Meremac. Students have no voice. What little voice they have is about what they will do socially—and they are limited as to what they do socially. Maybe a movie on Friday night, but they don't engage in any community projects. I couldn't take their structure, quite frankly.” Wildwood, however, is not completely free to do everything it might wish. As part of the St. Louis Community College district, Barbara admits that life is made difficult sometimes, given that activities such as purchasing have to be approved by the district office. She observed: “I made a request for some textbooks last semester, and I haven't seen them yet.”

Tom Saybrook

Tom Saybrook—biographical sketch

Tom Saybrook is a Professor of History in the Division of Humanities and Social Science at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. Tom got his start as a helicopter pilot in the army—after six years in the military; he enjoyed a fourteen-year tenure with the U.S. Forest Service. Throughout that tenure, he confessed that he “dreamed of being a history teacher.” Over the course of 20 years with the government, he began taking graduate-level history classes from Colleges and Universities all over the country, eventually amassing enough credits to earn a Master’s in History.

After leaving the Forest Service, Tom worked at Principia College (IL) for 16

years as a Professor of History, where his wife was also employed. During that time, he began his doctoral studies at St. Louis University. After two years work towards the dissertation, Tom's studies were affected by a new publication that usurped his topic, and Tom had to return to the drawing board for original research. Eventually, life led him to a project revolving around the concept of "historic memory" in the United States, with specific emphasis on Kermit Tyler and the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

After earning his doctorate and enjoying several years at Principia, Tom and his wife nearly left the Midwest—both he and his wife submitted their resignations at the College. Before they could completely cut ties, Tom's wife was offered a promotion. His old position filled, Tom reached out to local Colleges and Universities for new opportunities. Tom was chosen from over 100 candidates who applied for the position of Professor at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. He reported that he had been learning a great deal since starting work there in January of 2009.

Tom Saybrook—photo elicitation and interview

Tom had high praise for the direction of this research, offering encouragement for choice of topic during our interview. Tom returned 18 photographs that might be classified in three sections—a series of images in the classroom when no students are present, capturing angles of the teacher's workstation and other classroom features; a group of pictures of student social spaces on campus; and photographs of the building exterior, including some unique images of green features like a rainwater catch and irrigation system that has been built in to the building walls. Like many of his colleagues,

Tom used words like “open” to describe the Wildwood campus, and added that the lounges and common spaces are “very airy, very receptive—not at all constricting and very well laid out, very pleasant.” He anticipated that, as Wildwood grows, the green features will increase in importance for students choosing Colleges. Though he doesn't know of any plan for Wildwood to be a residential campus in the future, Tom hypothesized: “What a great selling point—our three classroom buildings are all environmental, and so is the dorm, and look at what you can do here. I imagine there are very few dorm buildings on college and university campuses that are green.”

Over the course of our interview, it became obvious that Tom was still learning about the green features on campus as well—he often paused to ask me questions about the green features on campus, such as the fans and open ceilings, the use of particular products in the restroom, and the reasons why the green roof might be kept behind locked doors. He explained that “the teachers didn’t get any formal orientation for it at all. I didn’t. I did get introduced on how to use the audiovisual equipment... It is probably better if they would so that I might be able to share it with someone. A really easy way to do it would be to work up a video on it. The first day of class, we are required to show a safety video that takes like 8 minutes. They could do the same thing here. It would have to be short and sweet—we could show it at the beginning of class—5-6 minutes. It would be worth being done, and it would introduce the students to the uniqueness and advantages of coming to this place for school. It is a great idea.” Tom anticipated great gains in doing so, and agreed that a more robust orientation might turn more Wildwood

stakeholders into advocates for the teaching and learning that is happening on campus.

Tom talked about expectations of what Wildwood would be like before coming to campus: “I saw the pictures online, and their comments about environmental sensitivity and the LEED Program. I was very impressed. I would have taken any job that was offered to me, but that was a plus. I recycle at home and I’m sensitive to water issues—we all have to get involved in this. Sounds sort of corny and stuff, but it’s true and there is no getting around it. When I see people throwing things away that could be recycled, I’m offended. They shouldn’t be doing that.” When I asked Tom if people on campus were using the recycling bins provided, he responded: “I see a number of the students and teachers throwing things away—just using the garbage pail for it. That is too bad.” I asked Tom if people on campus might be receptive to some intentional programming designed to engage more people with recycling on campus, to which he responded: “I think so. Why wouldn’t they be? It is more trouble, but I’m hopeful, as are you, that the people that come here see what is going on and have a sense of environmental sensitivity. You don’t have to be hired because of that, but you see it all around you on a daily basis so it would seem that would be appropriate.” I asked Tom if he thought his colleagues were “walking the walk,” and living green lifestyles while on campus. He responded: “Probably half and half—they could certainly do more things—don’t throw bottles away. I brought in a bunch of recycled paper that I use when I don’t need to use new paper. Not many of the other teachers are into that.”

Regarding his experience in the classroom, Tom pondered the potential for green

features to impact teaching and learning: “I do think the lighting—if you are in an area where there is a fair amount of sunshine—makes teaching and learning much easier and the students are much more receptive. It’s almost like—after a month or 6 weeks of gray clouds and overcast, you’re borderline depressed as opposed to sunshine every day. That doesn’t translate to successful education but it does translate to your mental outlook.” Tom confirmed that he has noticed such results in his own classrooms. He added his appreciation for the standardization of classrooms at Wildwood, noting that, though he teaches four classes in four different rooms, “They are all the same, so it is OK. If it were different, that would be a challenge.” That said, he anticipated that students might find that standardization “boring,” but hopes that “once the students have been in class for a couple of weeks, they don’t even notice.” Later in our conversation, Tom added: “To work and live at a facility that is designed that way strikes me as being really positive. I think the students, when they think about it, they probably see it that way too. Most of the faculty see it that way. Our opportunity to teach in a well lit, well-ventilated, well-organized room, is tremendously valuable and takes a whole lot of pressure off a teacher.”

Tom reported that some of the green features in the classroom can be problematic at times—he specifically mentioned the potential for the large windows to bring in a glare off the whiteboard, and revealed that closing the topmost windows was impossible without “putting a chair on the table” and climbing up to reach them. To Tom, this was sometimes more trouble than it was worth: “If you walk into the classroom and you are

going to show a movie, let’s say, and those happen to be open, you’ve got a challenge on your hands... It's hard to believe someone didn't think of that.” He mentioned that students rarely make comments about the green features on campus, assuming that “they are used to it.”

Tom explained that “the faculty offices have some challenges... Downstairs, the senior administrators have nice offices. They have a view of the lake—it is very attractive. The faculty, who are doing the work teaching the kids, we are sharing offices—2 or 4 to an office. The adjuncts, they are in this big bullpen that has about 10-12 tables where they can work but there are 2-3 of them in there—there are conversations going on—there are all sorts of things going on that are not conducive to prepping for class. They have one room that is designed for individual conversations between several faculty members or students and faculty members. It is often in use. I have six adjuncts that work for me and I try hard to make things as pleasant for them as I can. Having to share an office with three other people—they are nice people and trying hard and very positive, but it’s just not a good idea.”

Several of Tom's photographs captured the technology available to teachers in classrooms at Wildwood. “While this doesn’t relate specifically to being green, it does relate to being new, and the best way to set up a classroom that will take advantage of what we have to offer—for example, the harvesting of natural light. You want your classrooms set up so you get natural light... I was also impressed with the capability of a new school to set this stuff out for the teacher.” He added some comparisons to previous

teaching experiences: “Last semester, I taught at Louis & Clark Community College, which is a real old building. The teaching platform area didn’t have a set up for VCR tapes. It was just a mess showing VCRs there—it was terrible. When I walked in here, it was brand new, good stuff, nice set up—I was pleased... This relates more to the newness of the school than it does to the greenness. Although, it you are able to save money by doing green things, you can spend it in other places, like your audiovisual stuff.” Tom praised the planning that has gone into support for teaching with technology at Wildwood, describing a team that will get you help “in a very short amount of time” should it be needed.

Tom explained that he has been part of conversations with the President regarding future campus phases, though admitted that there was a lot to learn before he could shake that “brand new” feeling. He wondered aloud if the College could sell some acreage to speed up campus expansion, and anticipated some gains to be made per reduced loan rates and the availability of local contractors at the time of our conversation. “I bet the next building will be different than this, but dramatically better.” Tom offered that he had heard that “[The President] is hoping the new building will be for nursing technology.” He added that he was hopeful that future buildings would be better set up for faculty offices. “She didn’t think so—she wasn’t supportive of that. She has a beautiful office so she is not worried. She is a former teacher and you’d think she would say that faculty need nice offices. It is a small thing so I can live with it.” Tom advised that he “would love to see them expand that library greatly” in future building phases, though added, “It

is possible that a lot of what you need from the library can be done on the computer. Most of [the students] have personal computers, and most of them can get what they need. The school will loan you a personal computer as well. They have quite a few." Tom pondered the tradeoffs that may have been considered when the Wildwood building was conceived: "Libraries are great, multipurpose rooms are great, faculty offices are great, bathrooms are great, but you have to have classrooms, students and faculty."

Towards the end of our conversation, Tom offered some advice for future community college leaders pondering the potential in building green: "I think it is a win-win idea—its time has come. We can't rely on foreign oil any more—we've got to reduce our dependence on all those kinds of things and this is the way to do it. Granted, it can cost more but there are also ways to cut the costs and over the long term, it is going to be cheaper." Tom suggested that there were a "million things" that might be done to offset higher initial costs when building green, including altering semester schedules to avoid heating costs in the coldest months of the year.

An Illuminating Story from Tom

During our conversation, Tom drew on his experience as one member of a family of educators, and urged stakeholders to think beyond the present day when planning a college campus. He offered: "I live at another college, and I go into the college classrooms over there to make copies, to see colleagues, for a variety of reasons. I think they could do this much better. I think it is a shame that they didn't think this out better environmentally. However, as you know so well, when they are building these things 25

years ago, no one was thinking about environmental needs."

Tom explained that these planning issues affected his home life, as well: "We live in a house on campus—we've lived in it for 12 years. It was built in 1938—the wind blows through the windows. Terrible insulation—the heating bill is astronomical in the winter and of course, Illinois and Missouri have cold winters. The cooling bills—fortunately we are normally gone in the summer, but the cooling bills are astronomical. The same thing with the campus."

Tom seemed well acquainted with the College's origins: "Principia was designed by a guy named Bernard Maybeck in the early 30's—he is a well-known architect in California. The original concept was an English village. The first 5-6 dorms, the first administrative buildings and teaching buildings have this classic, unusual English village where the windows are offset and there is a lot of beams—it is very attractive, very classic, very attractive. Then in the late 60's, early 70's, they had this huge influx of students—they doubled in size so they had to throw up these brick buildings that looked like a Holiday Inn—it was horrible. The comparison between the Maybeck buildings and the newer buildings was just staggering and depressing—they didn't even try to make them look like the older buildings." Tom explained that the College now suffers from not thinking ahead: "The Principia classrooms are 70 years old and not well-lit, poor desk arrangements, poor blackboard and screen arrangements—the architect was clearly not a teacher." Tom described how Principia is working to respond to classroom issues: "About 10 years ago, they authorized some money to retrofit a few of the classrooms. So five or

so of the classrooms were set up like this. They have better ventilation, blinds, blackboards, and audiovisual setups. Still, [Wildwood] is a very much superior learning environment than the other 3 places that I've taught. Just the air quality, the lighting, the audiovisual and the newness of the rooms are just great."

Mary Dennison

Mary Dennison—biographical sketch

Mary Dennison is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. She had an interest in teaching from early in life, and double-majored in Mathematics and English as an undergraduate. In her words, she pursued a double major because she "wanted to be able to pick a school and have twice as many opportunities" upon graduation. She spent eight years as a math teacher in California Public Schools. In time, she returned to school for a Master's in Mathematics, with every intention of staying in the public school system after finishing her advanced degree. It was only after graduation that she realized that her new credential qualified her to teach on the College level. Eventually, she left California public schools for a collection of adjunct assignments at many Orange County community colleges, private colleges, and institutions in the California State University System.

Mary made special note of how her background in K-12 schools has influenced her interaction with College facilities. Mary offered that, in the K-12 system, "when you're in a bad classroom, you stay in that bad classroom all day, every day." She has had

experience teaching in “portables” and other temporary classrooms used well beyond their intended duration. Though she never experienced health problems from the mold and other contaminants, she observed other colleagues whose health was adversely affected in these spaces. She emphasized that she feels “privileged” and “lucky” to be teaching at the Wildwood Campus.

Mary is currently pursuing an Ed.D. at the University of Southern California. She has seen a proposal for research accepted regarding African-American student success in community college engineering programs and will begin research in 2009.

Mary Dennison—photo elicitation and interview

Mary brought great candor and a broad perspective to our conversations, having taught at many other Colleges, including in California and other schools in the St. Louis District. Mary was also one of only a few research participants who used the entire roll of film in their camera, returning 27 images in total. Her photographs included a series of images of the Wildwood exterior as seen from a car, several that captured people using Wildwood spaces—including cleaning staff, campus infrastructure such as staircases and the elevators—and a group of images of faculty space, including offices, common space, and lounge area.

Before coming to campus for the first time, Mary explained that she had the chance to participate in a “virtual tour,” via slides and discussion at a District professional development event. Mary advised me that the photographs presented there fell well short of communicating what it is actually like to be on campus: “I’d say that virtual tour didn’t

give me a full picture of how open everything was. You don't see how clean, open and light it is." Her appreciation for the openness and lighting on campus does not seem to have waned since joining the full-time faculty—she added that "even the stuff with the utilities doesn't look atrocious... what a nice space for our students to work in. It is a welcoming environment." Later in our conversation, she added: "I think that is part of our location and building is the view. Each of our 4 campuses is very different. Florissant Valley is talked about as the most beautiful acres of the college, but I think Wildwood is going to give it a run for its money."

Mary and I talked at length about how the College's green features intersect with teaching. She explained: "I see a lot of classes happening without the lights on at all. One of the classrooms has a whole wall of windows, and you'll walk by and the lights are off. I turn the light on when I get there, but they are working in there with the lights off." Mary has endeavored to use some green ideas in her own classroom, as well: "I was doing a lesson on growth and decay last week, and was able to talk about the difference in a Styrofoam cup and a wood pencil. Everyone in the class gets that if buried them both, the pencil is going to decay much more quickly that the Styrofoam cup. There are a hundred examples I could have used—the growth of the mosquitoes population—the same concept, but I was able to talk about how many more years it will take for the Styrofoam cup to decay than it is for the pencil."

Mary praised the air quality at Wildwood, attributing the difference to the College's smoking policies and air circulation systems: "I've taught at places where I've

walked into the classroom and it I would start to sneeze—I'm not highly allergic to anything that I know of, but some of those temporary buildings I've taught in, really have some bad smells. The smoke was always a pet peeve of mine. Not having smoke around me makes it a more pleasant place for me." Mary added that, compared to other places she has worked, Wildwood benefits from being a new space with new equipment: "Being somewhere new is really enjoyable. Just knowing where I walk into the classroom, I'm not going to have to worry about students sitting in broken chairs, or will there be a fight for space because these desks are easier to sit in than those desks... It is nice to be able to know that any room I walk into is going to be well lit, have great equipment, nice tables and chairs for the students, and much less distraction." She also explained that the new facilities and technology are just a few parts of the package at Wildwood—though the sum total of that experience adds up: "They talk about faculty who dress nice, and how it presents a different impact on students. There are some people who think wearing jeans and a t-shirt is fine, and sometimes I do that. The presentation that the student sees does have an effect on whether they are going to perform a little bit better."

Mary did explain that the college was suffering because it lacked a college cafeteria—noting that "it would be a great way to get students engaged with each other," and that Wildwood could use more private spaces for study and meetings with students. Though plans for future phases of campus are in flux, Mary appreciated the College's efforts to collect input: "[The President] did a very good job of trying to get ideas from everyone else. She has met with every full-time instructor one on one. She has had open

sessions with students, asking them what their ideas are. I would imagine she has had those conversations with staff. She has gone out of her way to get that information from people. Everyone has had an opportunity to put their two cents in."

Mary noted her fondness for recycling on campus: "I love the fact that there is recycling around the corner. I'm not a really strong environmentalist, but I hate throwing away something that I know could be recycled. They changed the signs now—the trash cans say 'landfill.' Isn't that an amazing idea? It really makes you think about what you are doing when you throw things away. Am I going to throw this in the landfill, or can I afford to walk three feet away to put it in the other bin?" Mary appreciated that the commitment to recycle does reflect an additional and ongoing burden for the College to bear. Mary described one photograph: "This is one of our maintenance staff. She comes in every day to check the trash. Finally, I realized she doesn't really need to take my trash every day. She is picking up the recycle bin and she is picking up the trash bin. So, when you talk about recycling, there are a lot of added costs to recycling that we don't think about. One of the costs is the manpower of collecting all the recycling. She is doing—she comes in and takes two trashcans out—it's not that you can add it up into tens of thousands of dollars, but there is an added cost."

Mary took several photographs of the faculty spaces on campus, including the faculty common room: "It's a big, high ceiling, very well ventilated... The daylight coming in is great with this big window here. The entire faculty working together in one big room helps us to work across department lines." Mary did add that there are

difficulties in sharing a finite amount of space: “That is definitely a setback. You find different times of the day—like now is good, because there is no one down here. After 5:00 p.m., between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., there is no one here. You start to learn to find times when you are able to get more done... Full-time faculty will be maxed out with one more, as far as office space. Next, they will have to take over space like this, which is supposed to be a conference room. It is getting close to that max.” Mary also photographed the Wildwood faculty lounge, and noted: “The dishwasher encourages folks to conserve resources. I enjoy that... What an amazing if you want to save money, but also saving resources.”

I asked Mary about the College's green roof, and she responded: “I don’t think there is much understanding of what it is supposed to do. That is partially the fault of the roof because it has not bloomed yet—it’s not that 'green' yet. It’s mostly dirt. I happened to tour to the Ford plant in Detroit that has a full green roof, and it’s a real green roof. It’s big and lush, and people are out there enjoying the roof. This isn’t really a roof for us to go out and enjoy... I don’t think we can go out there, but there is not that much to look at, in my opinion.” This prompted some discussion of how people learn about the green features at Wildwood. Mary offered: “I know that our facilities manager did a workshop at our professional development team, just for anyone. It wasn’t just for maintenance staff. If you want to learn how to clean green in your home, he is the one to go to. He is very knowledgeable about it. The staff uses environmentally friendly stuff.” Mary urged a continued exploration of learning opportunities for Wildwood stakeholders: “I’ve not had

any part in the orientation of the facilities, and I don't think we do nearly enough with that. That should be a part for anyone who is new to the college. It would be really worthwhile... We don't do nearly enough orientation."

At the end of our conversation, I asked Mary if she had noticed behaving differently away from campus because of her Wildwood experience. She commented: "I'm more conscious—I'm more likely to walk into Starbucks with my own cup than I was before I worked here. I don't do that every time, but I'm more likely to. I'm more likely to visit my parents and when they throw out bottles, I'll probably take them with me and bring them to school to recycle." She closed: "I'm proud to say I'm part of this campus. As people in St. Louis become more and more aware of our campus, that seems to be the first thing they know about it is that we are green. It's great to work at a campus that is known for something good."

An Illuminating Story from Mary

Near the end of our conversation, I asked Mary what advice she might share with community college leaders considering green building projects. She encouraged: "Milk it for as much as you can—be a penny pincher and a conservationalist (sic). When I was a math student, rather than spend money on graph paper, I came up with a way to use my lined paper—why buy graph paper when you can improvise? Don't just come up with the fluffy words, but also really come up with some activities in curriculum—include things in curriculum to really impact the lives of students, faculty and staff. Make them more aware of environmental issues before they leave campus." Mary stressed the great

potential for Wildwood to change people's lives: "How can so many students walk in and out of our doors and not be changed for the rest of their lives on environmental issues? I have one student who said he doesn't believe in global warming. He thinks it's all fiction. I told him to Google earth and look at the difference between 20 years. He wasn't ready to go past it. I'm a math teacher—I'm not a science teacher so I can't show him. But what if in our writing class we were writing about environmental issues, and what if in our math classes we had some type of resource that gave us data about how long it takes for something to decay? If the number was at my fingertip or it was posted out there, I would be able to say it with the detail. Make it part of the curriculum and take advantage of all the money that has been spent on it—take advantage of that to make it a learning opportunity. If you are going to spend a lot of money, make sure you milk it for as much as you can." I asked Mary if those conversations were going on at Wildwood, and she admitted: "No—it's all the fluffy stuff. We have an Environmental Club but we never hear anything from it. It would be great if they did more awareness—if one more person became more aware, it would be great. I wish that we could have more resources in support of that."

Marguerite Martin

Marguerite Martin—biographical sketch

Marguerite Martin is full-time Faculty and Chair of English, Reading, and Interdisciplinary Studies at St. Louis Community College at Wildwood. She joined the College district in 2004 as an Adjunct Professor in Composition, working primarily out of

the Meramec campus at its extension locations. Her early experience was as a teacher of developmental English and English 102 courses, though very quickly became involved in the SLCC "Cornerstone" program, a college success course designed to orient students to skills and information critical to their continued success. She continues to complement a teaching load in Reading and Composition with assignments in Cornerstone classes.

Marguerite started her own educational journey as a Music major at The University of Texas at Austin. Before long, she "heard a different calling," and finished her undergraduate degree at the University of Texas at Dallas in their Business program. She spent 13 years in the banking industry with several mortgage banks, though when one employer went bankrupt, Marguerite decided to return to school for an MFA in Creative Writing at the University of Missouri at St. Louis (UMSL). After graduation, Marguerite stayed at UMSL as a writing tutor until 1998.

From 1998-2004, Marguerite concentrated on raising her two children. She has recently returned to graduate school in pursuit of a Doctorate in Adult Literacy at UMSL, and is currently enjoying coursework in teaching and educational leadership.

Marguerite Martin—photo elicitation and interview

Marguerite displayed great creativity and innovation during our interviews, and seemed encouraged that this research focused on collecting the perspectives of faculty and students. During our conversation, she referenced a writing exercise she had used recently in class to help students reflect on their experience at Wildwood, and shared some of what she had learned. Marguerite returned 24 photographs during reflexive

photography, including several images that focused on windows in halls and lounges, exterior features including campus archways and the pond, and indoor architectural features such as sloping ceilings and air-circulating fans. Additionally, Marguerite was the only research participant to photograph the crystal plaque commemorating Wildwood's LEED certification.

Marguerite revealed that she didn't know Wildwood would be a green campus before her first visit. She explained her expectations: “I thought it would be like the South County location, in that it would probably have modern computer technology, and also be your average corporate building. When I pulled up, that is what I saw—the average square building, looks great, nice campus. I don’t think I’m the only one that had that impression. I did have one student that said he and his brother thought this was a bank until they took notice of the sign, and were surprised that it was a college... Nice place, modern amenities, and that was all that I was thinking about.” Though she admitted that she sometimes worries about the many windows on campus and potential damage from tornados, she added: “I think that I’ve come to develop a real appreciation for the building. The more I understand about the building—the more I do in it and the more commentary I get about it—the more I appreciate it. I’d say it would be hard not to be in this building and to be working somewhere else. I couldn’t really see myself willingly going somewhere else. Here, I see that we are really setting a new lifestyle—a new way of living, a new way of working. I will stay here all day and not realize I’ve been here so long. It’s very vibrant and bright. It keeps me awake.”

Since joining Wildwood faculty, she has observed how students interact with the green features on campus. In one of her photographs, Marguerite captured what she called “a favorite student spot, where a lot of community building takes place... It is just a very nice place—it is very bright and happy. The whole layout of it—it’s round and you can see everyone—it’s relaxed.” Marguerite agreed that many students are curious and interested in the College's the open ceilings: “I’ve heard that before too. It makes it real—you see what is really there.” Marguerite explained that the experience of being on campus at night is a unique experience: “It takes on a different quality at night on the third floor. There is still that openness, but it is dark. You are really seeing the outdoors from indoors. If you are here long enough, if you are here all day, you see the morning, afternoon, and evening light. It takes on kind of a glow.”

Marguerite compared her experience at Wildwood to other colleges that she has visited, including the University of Missouri at St. Louis: “They refurbished and it just glows, but it is all windowless hallways. It is beautiful—it’s not marble but it glows and is glossy, but there are no windows. I think about that all the people who work in there—it is very similar to a section of Forest Park, where it is a long hallway of offices, with doors that close, all the way down the hallway. You technically come to work, go in your office, shut the door, and no one knows if you are there or not. I’ve walked all the way down the hallway before seeing anyone. Here, it is a lot different, even if you are in an office with the door closed, everyone can see you and you can see them—you are not shut off.” Marguerite did wonder if there were people who would be upset by the

exposure at Wildwood—who would prefer the closed spaces on other campuses. She explained that the openness does create some challenges to personal privacy: “There are times I don’t get my work done because people are coming through and talking. I consider that part of the job here. Everyone needs to learn how to manage that in their own way... I’ll even close the door sometimes when there is really some major thing I have to do. People will still come and knock because they see me and it’s welcoming. I don’t want anyone to go away mad. That openness is an invitation even when you are trying to block out the world for a little while.” Ultimately, Marguerite seemed to assign the open office a positive quality: “I’ll hear about a topic that I can feed off in my class. It’s nice to have that open discussion going on all the time. I don’t think we would have that if we were all in our own offices.”

Marguerite was one of a very few people who commented on the shower at Wildwood—though disagreed with other reports that it is open to anyone on campus: “As far as I know, it is just open to faculty. What I think is interesting about that, is that it gives people a new way of thinking about what is possible. I’m laughing because there are always a lot of jokes about the shower. What is the shower there for? It’s there for the employees who might want to work out on their lunch break or ride a bike to campus. I kind of feel like it sets a tone or give someone a new way of thinking about what the perks of a job could be.” Marguerite said that very few people use the shower at present, and attributed the lack of use to heavy workloads, and cited that “there is a stigma of not wanting to be seen as too unusual by being downstairs taking a shower.” She added: “we

have the right idea here as a campus for it, but I see that as society still catching up with that idea. Who's to say that during the summer that someone wouldn't use it. There are lots of instructors who teach on campus in the summer, and there are events held during the days, so there might be a time when it does happen."

I asked Marguerite if there are regular opportunities for people to learn about the facilities, and she noted: "Not officially. Not in that if you are someone who just walks in and decides to register and gets into class. Not every class gets a tour. Different groups—we had a high school group here yesterday who were given a tour of the building. To kick things off, I'll walk around with the students." Marguerite recalled that she had been able to take part in a campus tour during her first semester, when she was still a part-time instructor, though explained: "A lot of the stuff you forget. At that time, I didn't quite understand how it worked—it didn't occur to me until later." She has benefited from being part of meetings where the College President is teaching guests about the green features: "I just only recently learned that there is a carbon monoxide sensor behind the fan, at a meeting with [the President] at Rookwood School District." Marguerite explained that one of the more interesting ways that she has learned about the building is from her students: "One of our design students had said that she noticed the curves of the building, and I had never thought of it that way—that the building is curved. I always thought of the building just as a building. She wrote a paper, and during our talk about her writing, she mentioned the curves. I learned a lot from her, actually."

I asked Marguerite if she had noticed a community response to the Wildwood

building. She mentioned: “It looks like the Rockwood school district is interested in the building—the big Rockwood Science fair. To me, that is a great start because that brings parents, grandparents, up to the building for other reasons other than school.” Marguerite advised that there is still room to enhance what Wildwood offers, towards a more significant community response: “I think also it depends on us providing something here that is attractive. I’m the sponsor of the creative writing club, and we have a student journal started. We’d really like to get poetry reading started here, and more literary events. Once we can get something going with that that would also attract people.” Though she urged the College to grow capacity for special events, Marguerite did mention some unique programs that have already begun to happen on the Wildwood campus. She shared a story about an outdoor movie screening that happened at the College: “I brought my kids and it was funny and embarrassing—my six year old was telling me he could see stars. Back in the suburbs, you’ve got trees and street lights and porch lights, and you might see one or two stars from the deck… I hope we don't lose that quality.”

Marguerite advised me that she has noticed Wildwood faculty using the campus grounds as teaching tools: “Like the art instructor having the students come out to sketch this area—the photography class taking landscape pictures, and then my own writing students coming out to write and catching them in the act of doing their thing.” She confessed that she hasn't noticed disciplines such as the natural sciences take similar advantage. I also asked Marguerite how she felt about the lack of decoration in the

college classrooms, and she responded: “I think there might be some reluctance to do too much to any classroom because it can be seen as a distraction. I think that would be great—I think that would add to the ambiance of the place, and people might start thinking of the rooms as the landscape, or the corporate room…I think it would be a great idea. There may be still some thinking on uniformity but I could be wrong.”

Over the course of our conversation, Marguerite made note of how some of the campus green features intersect with her own teaching, including the classroom lighting: “I would say that the lighting, in some way, plays a role every day just in terms of conversation or in my class—it has become a question—do we want the lights on now? I would say it is a daily factor in my classes in some way. To my mind it is creating a tone, and setting mood. I think the conversational level between myself and my students has taken on a different tone than at the other campus I worked at. At other campuses, it might be more complaining about something—I mean people sitting around and worrying about all the stuff they have to do, or this and that. Now we talk about the weather, the lights… People look for something in common to talk about and it gives us a focus. Instead of having that homework assignment in common, they also have the space, the view, and the light.”

Marguerite was one of many participants to photograph the College's green roof. When discussing her photographs, Marguerite commented: “Often it has been remarked that the plants haven’t grown much. We are still waiting on that—I think they are supposed to be slow growers.” I asked Marguerite if she knew about why the green roof

was locked; she explained: “I think it is my understanding that we are really not supposed to [go out there] yet. I’m not sure what all the factors are—they could not want to damage the plants. We can’t just do it on a whim—I’m sure of there was a real need that we needed out there, we would be allowed to do it. In general, they say it is locked and let’s keep it that way for now... I was told the first semester that eventually they see that as a place to hold class. That was what it was seen for. I don’t know what the hold up is now.”

Marguerite did suggest that Wildwood was missing things that would make it a more complete campus—noting that there could be more special events to help attract more visitors, childcare and theatre facilities, and a horticultural program to leverage the unique College resources. I asked Marguerite what advice she might like to share with College stakeholders considering their own green building projects, and she responded: “I think we are doing great here—but I think the more we’ve got, I realize how much more we can do. I would say my advice is not thinking not only the design of the building, but also what else can be done. Incorporate an element of the philosophy into the curriculum, which is what we are starting to do. Make the curriculum part of the whole thing.”

An Illuminating Story from Marguerite

During our conversation, Marguerite explained that there is potential to do new and exciting things at a place like Wildwood: “You can reinvent what can be done and make the environment part of what is going on in the classroom. I've always tried to do that at the other places [I've taught]. I always made them go out and observe the campus, or we would look out the window and talk about what was going on outside—just try to

keep things mixed up in the classroom. This building takes it to a whole new level because it is about a philosophy, it's not just about the building." She added: "One of our admissions staff will be teaching a class on sustainability in the fall. I'm glad to think that Wildwood has created that course. That is the kind of thing I would like to see more of." Marguerite was not afraid to share her thoughts on potential opportunities for Wildwood during our interview. She added to her list of suggestions: "Perhaps some ongoing project that we could have on campus that is visible—maybe have one of those organic farms here that is a community farm. That would require someone who would be here just to keep that on track. That would be bringing in the community—that could be something that worked. This was all farmland, I think. Those are my hopes—to make it something that goes along with the building and makes us unique. I think that would make us attractive and I think it would be something that the local Wildwood community would be proud of." I asked Marguerite if she has had the chance to share these ideas with College administration, and she described some informal feedback that she has given. "In general, the things I talked about, nothing was squelched yet. I think we are more in the talking stage—there may be pressures on the president that I'm not aware of." Unfortunately, Marguerite confessed that some of her ideas—like building an energy-producing windmill on campus—will take knowledge that goes beyond her own expertise: "I sit around and think about these things. There are so many ways you can go. Budget is an issue. English instructors can sit around and think of these great ideas but it's going to take a science person to have the know how to get it off the ground."

Reflections on Methodology

The choice of case study methodology remains a strong choice for this research, given the unique characteristics of the Wildwood campus—which remains the only community colleges in the United States where all facilities are LEED certified. Over the course of this research, many opportunities for comparing the Wildwood campus to other colleges were noticed—as will be discussed in the sections regarding limitations and suggestions for future research in the next chapter.

In researching methodological opportunities that might be appropriate for this project, scholars noted the great potential for visual ethnography to elicit deeper reflection, connection and analysis on the part of research participants. Reflexive photography and photo elicitation were chosen for this research given the strong precedent for using these methods in education settings, and with the intent to create the most engaging opportunity possible for participants. In practice, I found that over half of participants completed the reflexive photography portion of the research within suggested timelines; two of the participants returned disposable cameras as late as my visit to the Wildwood campus. Conversations that stemmed from participant photographs often anticipated questions that were part of the interview guide I brought to each session, and yielded many stories that would not have been uncovered using traditional interviews alone. More than one participant cited the opportunity to make photographs as part of this

research as a unique and positive experience. The logistics of sending, receiving and processing film at a distance were a challenge, though not insurmountable. In the opinion of this researcher, reflexive photography and photo elicitation played an integral role in the results gathered for this research, and would be recommended to others for future research projects with similar objectives.

The use of qualitative interviews was an indispensable complement to reflexive photography and photo elicitation. Would this research have used photography alone, analysis would have been based solely in semiotic analysis of images. To truly discover the perspectives of students and faculty regarding their experience in green buildings, it was necessary to record their descriptions, and use their understanding of campus phenomena to build a picture of life as a teacher or learner at a green community college. During the initial planning of research methodology, focus groups and other interview methods were considered as potential complements to the selected methodology. Per participant time constraints and other logistical limitations, interviews were limited to one-on-one conversations only. Though focus groups may have prompted participants to probe responses and encourage collaborative thinking, research participants displayed a tremendous candor during one-on-one interviews that might have been limited in the presence of their colleagues. Future research may wish to pair these methods in the interest of learning what might be gained from use of both methods.

Only two participants opted to create journals to complement their photographs. Though the invitation to compile journals was presented during initial conversations and

reiterated in written instructions, the opportunity to create journals remained an option—not a direction. It remains hard to imagine a relationship between researcher and participant that would be completely binding, unless some system of rewards was utilized, and/or some explicit road map assigned to participants to follow through to completion. Given that the emphasis in using this methodology was on participant freedom and creativity, the loss of written journals seems less important than the individualized responses earned via photo elicitation and qualitative interviews. There may be much to gain from journals that complement recorded images—future research may wish to explore the most effective ways to secure participant engagement with this research option. For this project in particular, the lack of written journals is seen as having had only a minor and negligible influence on research outcomes.

An Important Omission: The Absence of the Administrative Perspective

At this point, it may be worth revisiting the decision to focus on the perspectives of students and faculty in this study, and purposefully omit any related response from College administration. Admittedly—interesting discoveries may lie within the uncollected stories of Wildwood's leaders, managers and supervisors. Their responses may provide insight as to why certain decisions were made, and enable a more detailed understanding of the internal negotiations that led to certain courses of action at Wildwood. Future studies may wish to add or focus on the administrative experience, towards a more comprehensive picture of the entire college community's experience that

result from a professional life in green buildings.

By way of omitting these administrative narratives, however, what we are left with is a portrait of the result of administrative action—the aftermath experienced by students and faculty at the conclusion of a long series of events. There is a certain purity in looking at these stories without their complement from College administration. Here there are few attempts to explain or rationalize, little effort to identify the politics or processes that undoubtedly influenced the way Wildwood went about creating its green campus. There are only the impressions that these students and faculty have been left with after weeks, months, or years of life as a part of the Wildwood community. These impressions, in turn, are the things that are affecting performance in the classroom on a daily basis. These impressions inspire the stories told to colleagues, friends, family, and other community members—at the very core of how any organization builds a reputation. These perspectives reflect the morale of teachers and learners in this green environment. They are real—and any leader seeking to bring green buildings to their own organization will do well to embrace them for that reality, and appreciate the absent explanation, rationalization or defense. If these stories can be embraced in such a way, there exists tremendous potential to respond with clarity—to change, enhance, or improve any part of that experience towards improved teaching and learning at green community colleges.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS

Introduction

The St. Louis Community College at Wildwood has done what no other community college in the United States has done before: it has created a campus that is entirely LEED certified, and has committed to achieving and maintaining certification for all future campus building projects. It is, in effect, the first completely green community college in the country. As seen from the results detailed in the previous chapter, Wildwood's green features play a role in the experience of students and teachers on campus. In the pages that follow, recurring themes will be highlighted and analysis presented, in an effort to build information from the perspectives of those volunteers who participated in this research. The goal of such critical thinking is to help create a more complete picture of the experience of teaching and learning on a green community college campus. It is hoped that this insight may be of value to community college stakeholders who are considering green building projects for their own campuses.

The urgency to prepare such information cannot be overstated—in the months since this research was initiated, green initiatives have found a regular place in the headlines of education media. Highlights from emerging literature include:

- Wake Technical College (NC) is in the process of creating a new campus north of Raleigh, North Carolina. As of late 2008, three buildings had been completed, each built to some degree of LEED standards. Application materials for LEED certification have been completed and submitted by Wake staff. Like Wildwood,

observers have noted the “abundance of natural light” at work in the new buildings, and report innovative heating and cooling solutions, lighting strategies, and a use if native plants for landscaping (Redden, 2008). College officials corroborate the growing body of evidence showing that costs associated with green buildings are falling; the College's Facility Engineering Officer, Wendell Goodwin, “estimates construction cost an extra half to 1.5 percent above the baseline” (Redden, 2008).

- In 2006, the Los Angeles Community College District (CA) announced its intention to explore renewable energy generation—effectively taking the College's campuses “off-grid.” Initial plans included building “enough solar energy cells to produce one megawatt of electricity at each of its colleges,” or the equivalent of the energy required to power 1,000 homes at each campus location (McIntire-Strasburg, 2006). In June of 2009, the LA District updated the community on progress towards that goal, and reported that it will achieve energy independence in mid-2010 (Berliant, 2009). The initiative’s Energy Director (and co-recipient of the Nobel Prize for work with the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) reports that the College District has pursued transparency and ongoing communication with stakeholders throughout the project, which has required three bond measures since 2001 (Berliant, 2009).
- An article in the 2009 Architecture Issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education profiles three new buildings that have been raised in pursuit of LEED

certification. The first, for the School of Business at the University of Illinois, "has solar panels, a green roof, natural ventilation, and other features intended to save $300,000 a year in energy costs and earn a gold or platinum LEED rating." The University of Southern California had to negotiate a combination of LEED standards and earthquake concerns when developing a new building for its School of Cinematic Arts, where "recast concrete and plaster structure is designed to meet LEED gold standards, to cut energy costs by 30 percent, and to exceed California's stringent seismic standards." The new Student Retention and Fitness Center at the University of Maine was built to LEED Silver specifications, and will "serve as both a recreational facility and a social gathering place for students, faculty members, and local residents" ("New Campus Architecture," 2009, p. B4).

- Inside Higher Ed has partnered with a sustainability administrator at an anonymized "large private research university" to create a blog titled "Getting to Green," which documents the institution's journey in pursuit of green opportunities in education (Rendell, 2008). This chronicle of challenges and successes has highlighted national education policy initiatives that support campus carbon neutrality (2008a), solutions for "greening" information technology (2008b), and the great test of navigating emerging legislation designed to reshape energy use across industries (2008c). In September of 2009, "Getting to Green" was ranked among the "100 Best Higher Education Blogs" (Online Degrees Hub, 2009).

- In June of 2009, Austin Community College (TX) joined the I-35 Green Corridor Collaborative, an effort to “create a collaborative approach to workforce training for high-demand green economy fields,” and a strategy to attract more Federal stimulus funding to Texas (Austin Community College, 2009). This program serves as a means for collaboration for students and stakeholders from the Dallas Community College District (TX), Temple College (TX), the Alamo Colleges (TX), and Texas State Technical College. Observers report that these programs, combined with Austin Energy's policy of buying power produced locally by alternative methods, may encourage regional growth of green job opportunities (Buchele, 2009).

During the course of this research, Wildwood itself has joined the group of colleges seeking to be recognized for their greener accomplishments. An article written by Wildwood administration was distributed in April of 2009 by the League for Innovation in the Community College, as part of their series titled Learning Abstracts. The article included the following:

- “[Wildwood] was the first LEED Gold certified community college campus in the Midwest and the first Gold certified building of any type in the St. Louis area.”
- “STLCC district leadership chose to build green in an effort to use key resources more effectively, and to create a healthier and more productive work and learning environment for both present and future generations of students, staff and faculty members, and the local community... These features allow the campus to achieve

a 30 percent energy conservation rate, to have excellent indoor air quality, and to reduce the building's impact on the environment."

- "Being a green campus is about more than the physical features of LEED construction; it is a mindset that faculty and staff members are asked to carry into their planning and practice on a daily basis... Every area, from physical facilities and campus life to academic affairs, is asked to integrate sustainability into its daily practices. Strategic partnerships in the community are cultivated to advance this focus and carry it beyond the campus."
- "In addition to the usual campus tours offered to prospective students, STLCC-Wildwood staff members offer guided tours to many groups who are interested in learning more about green buildings and sustainability... These tours focus on promoting sustainability and green building design by highlighting the physical features of the campus, the ways they positively impact the learning environment, and the ways they improve outdoor environmental conditions."
- "The Wildwood campus bookstore is also committed to integrating an environmentally friendly focus in the selection of merchandise. The bookstore carries products with minimal packaging and school supplies made from recycled materials where they are available."
- "Staff members who plan student activities include sustainability as one of their main programming priorities. When purchasing giveaways for students, they choose green and recycled products whenever possible."

- “Developing programming in partnership with the local community is another priority on the Wildwood campus. Last year, the campus reached out to the largest local school district and the nationally recognized Missouri Botanical Garden to create a project focused on sustainability education. This partnership resulted in a series of field trips held on campus for seventh graders, called 'Go Green' Science Days.”
- “STLCC-Wildwood infuses sustainability into the campus classroom experience. Several faculty initiatives have been designed and put into place to positively impact students and help them learn more about the green campus and the environment” (Aumann, 2009).

That Wildwood has taken major strides towards a greener future cannot be denied; claims regarding LEED certification, energy savings, and bookstore purchasing policies are best accepted as indelible fact. However, some of the other claims—especially those regarding campus tours and integrating green ideas into the curriculum—seem in contrast to the observations made by students and faculty who have lived the Wildwood experience. One can likely assume that any errors made by Wildwood administration are less an attempt to misinform, and more a result of unfinished communication efforts, or incomplete (but ongoing) initiatives. Undoubtedly, there are challenges in being the first to undergo any transformation as significant as becoming the country's first green community college. And therein we are reminded of the importance of this research—to inform the next group of community colleges that make the choice to “go green,” and

share strategies that might improve the faculty and student experience on these campuses. As this chapter of analysis continues, themes from data collection will be explored, and answers to research questions pursued, towards a catalogue of implications for practice.

Theme One: Green Features Seem to be Having an Effect at Wildwood

Prior research has offered a quantitative look at the ways in which a green campus can enhance the experience of teachers and learners on campus. The stories gathered in this qualitative work seem to complement those findings—and offer some insight as to how Wildwood faculty and students perceive that effect on their lives. The sum total of that effect seems quite positive, given the number of participants who professed some degree of support for the green features on campus—including individuals who go so far as to say that they “love” these College qualities.

Common among respondents' input were approvals of the College's use of natural light, the open floor plan, and the windows that connect building users with the outside world. Many respondents lauded the near-compulsive cleaning efforts on campus, the unique ways that Wildwood improved the sanitary conditions in the building's restrooms, and the College's non-smoking policies—though some participants admitted that the policies had yet to achieve thorough results. Students and faculty alike celebrated the effect that the air-circulating fans had on the health of anyone who spent time at Wildwood. Recall Simon Urso, who said that he hadn't been sick since joining the College student body, and called the air filtration system “the biggest thing that you can't get anywhere else.” Faculty member Joanna Dawson remembered that she has “always

gotten sick around finals time," but hasn't gotten sick as much since joining the Wildwood staff.

We also see that faculty and students make a direct connection between these green features and positive teaching and learning outcomes. Amy Moriarty validated the effect of windows and strategic lighting, saying that "here, everything is light, and it works better for learning." Chad King said that the view achieved through the many windows can help relax students, and "helps with focusing when you're having trouble working." Elly Palmer agreed: "Natural sunlight helps me focus. I think it helps other students focus." Simon Urso vouched for the windows and the view beyond as a source of inspiration in his art classes. Faculty member Tom Saybrook said that the classroom lighting and ventilation "takes a whole lot of pressure of the teacher," and that it "makes teaching and learning much easier, and the students are much more receptive."

Thus we see the quantitative results seen elsewhere made manifest in the perceived experience of students and faculty at one green campus. Things like use of natural light and air-circulating fans are not invisible—their effects do not go unnoticed. Students and faculty are aware of these green features and appreciate the difference that they make. As will be discussed in the section on recommendations for future research, this suggests that the green features on a college campus may have the potential to positively affect retention, persistence, and completion in the long-term.

Several Wildwood faculty indicated that the green campus has become entwined with their personal identity, and explained that the green focus has become important to

their outlook at work. Mary Dennison reported: “I'm proud to say I'm part of this campus... It's great to work at a campus that is known for something good.” Tom Saybrook offered that building green is “a win-win idea—its time has come... We've got to reduce our dependence on [foreign oil] and this is the way to do it.” Marguerite Martin confirmed that “it would be hard not to be in this building and to be working somewhere else. I couldn't really see myself willingly going somewhere else.” Here, we see that the green campus seems to inspire loyalty and pride for some faculty—perhaps not all, but a vocal contingent nonetheless. This would seem to be tremendous potential boon for colleges seeking to enlist faculty members in marketing efforts, and to leverage faculty talents for development work and other special projects.

But not all feedback regarding the green features at Wildwood was so overtly positive. Recall Sean Monahan, who described the air-circulating fans as a “horrible industrial thing,” which he “didn't like at all.” Kenneth Wood, Chair of Business and Information Technology, was impressed by the “open” feel of Wildwood, but hesitated to admit any effect on his teaching. Instead, he emphasized that it “goes back to what is going on in the space,” that he was “the same teacher” he was anywhere else, and that he didn't think he was a better teacher because of the green building. Perhaps these perspectives are reflective of a group of late-adopters on campus—Wood himself seemed to temper his hesitation with statements like “[the openness] may help to keep down the negative feelings,” and admitted that he might be a better teacher because of the green building, but didn't yet realize it. Nonetheless, green colleges would do well to anticipate

some contingent of students and faculty who remain skeptical about the green features on campus, and work to include them in conversations about facilities planning and future green initiatives. This type of input may help to balance a runaway fervor for emerging and untested trends, and engender trust and positive faculty relations via the broadest possible inclusion.

Theme Two: There are Special Decisions to be Made About Space on a Green Campus

As discussed in chapter two, architects and builders report that there are additional costs associated with the decision to create a green building. Recent news indicates that these added costs may be shrinking—nevertheless, the extra costs remain. During our interviews, Wildwood students and faculty displayed a sensitivity to decisions that have been made about allocation of space and resources on campus. Some participants, especially members of the faculty, cited those additional costs as having had a major influence on what space the College could assign for certain functions. Recall Kenneth Wood, who reported an understanding of "cost constraints" that the College has to negotiate when allocating space. Tom Saybrook conceded that "libraries are great, multipurpose rooms are great, faculty offices are great... but you have to have classrooms, students and faculty." Were Wildwood to design facilities so that they would please all stakeholders, the costs would likely be astronomical. Instead, tradeoffs are made, and an attentive leader listens to what decisions constitute the flash points for debate among faculty and students. At Wildwood, these flash points included privacy, standardization of classrooms, flexibility of space, and prioritization of things missing from the current

campus configuration.

Privacy and office spaces were a common concern among Wildwood faculty—and even observed among students like Amy Moriarty, who described her teachers as being “squished” in to tight spaces. Joanna Dawson found herself “walking the halls to privacy” on campus, and struggled to handle things like teacher discipline or student complaints in the open faculty setting. Kenneth Wood wondered: “Am I being as productive as I can be given the nature of the space that I'm occupying?” He said that it was “frustrating and counterproductive” to try and concentrate on the tasks required of a Division Chair among the cacophony of an open faculty workspace. Barbara Lipp confirmed these concerns from an adjunct faculty perspective, revealing that “what should be considered private is not” in the shared office spaces. Tom Saybrook agreed with the challenges presented by open office arrangements, where “there are all sorts of things going on that are not conducive to prepping for class.” Tom also explained that he has shared feedback regarding the need for better office facilities in future buildings with College administration, though the President “wasn't supportive of that” at the time.

Though not explicitly a result of the decision to build green, Wildwood also hosts discussion about standardization of classrooms. Sean Monahan called the College's classrooms “macabre” and wished that the College would add more stimulating decoration in teaching spaces, which he said would “get your brain cells firing.” Tom Saybrook anticipated that some students might find the standardization of classrooms “boring,” but hoped that “once the students have been in class for a couple of weeks, they

don't even notice." Both Japhy Ryder and Cody Pomeray credited the standardization of classroom technology as a great facilitator of making presentations in front of class. Marguerite Martin anticipated that the reluctance to derivate from a classroom standard might be an attempt to lessen in-class distractions, though predicted that more decoration "would add to the ambiance of the place," which would be a "great idea."

The flexibility of campus space was a topic of discussion among some students and faculty. Cody Pomeray noted that he has had to combine four classes into one—with four concurrent teaching plans at work—per the single classroom dedicated to art on campus. He enjoyed the chance to be "creative about space," and said that students seemed to be happy about the growing number of art classes offered on campus—though student Japhy Ryder seemed conflicted about the arrangement, calling the conglomeration a challenge to motivation, but also a source of inspiration. Sean Monahan observed that the one study space on campus was really "the multipurpose room cut in half," but enjoyed the College's "casual" attitude regarding students finding unoccupied classrooms for meetings and study. Joanna Dawson urged colleges to build this kind of flexibility in to their facilities plan, though reported that it may be harder to do so on a green campus. Given the specific ways in which light and air circulation are managed at Wildwood, "you can't just throw up a wall to solve a problem." Joanna recommended that "you could design things to be used for multiple purposes as long as you think of it ahead of time. You just can't do it afterwards."

Wildwood students and faculty had much to share when asked what types of

facilities were missing from campus. The ideas shared by participants included a cafeteria, gymnasium, swimming pool, a larger lobby, more student study space, and a diverse array of programs and activities not currently offered at Wildwood. Japhy Ryder explained that he had low expectations for being able to find anything relevant to his coursework in the College library; Barbara Lipp agreed that the current library collection was “pathetic,” and has noticed a difference in the work her students produce in class as a result. Other ideas regarding what was missing from the current facility were considerably more progressive, and would be unique on any community college campus, including the community farm suggested by Japhy Ryder. He noted: “If that's something that could draw people in, then that's something to do.”

There are likely many factors that influenced how Wildwood was laid out—not just the additional costs associated with building green. The building plan was likely affected by everything from choice of architect, staffing strategies, personal preferences and philosophies of District leadership, and a myriad of other factors. Ultimately, that slate of influence determined what square footage was allocated for offices, how classrooms would look, and which facilities made the cut, and which were left as possibilities for future building phases. What remains after the building was completed—after the building has been in operation for over two years—is a group of faculty and students who have questions and concerns about current and future facilities at Wildwood. Explanations have not always been given regarding why things like a cafeteria or gymnasium are missing, or why the library is relatively small. While the

College seems invested in collecting input from stakeholders on a regular basis (see discussion of Theme Five), perhaps there remains an untapped opportunity to build a channel of communication in the other direction. That is, green colleges may benefit from building a shared and indelible vision for current and future campus growth and expansion. In all likelihood, there will always be some contingent whose interests are left unmet when Colleges create new buildings—but even those people whose ideas remain unrealized would understand the logic of decisions being made. In a best case scenario, college leadership may turn some of those detractors into advocates via mutual understanding and respect.

For now, Wildwood might be satisfied to reflect on the silver lining of a campus that, per students and faculty, has so much left to do. The College seems to realize some present gains because of those very limits placed on facilities growth per the cost of building green. Several students mentioned their appreciation for the smaller size of the campus and student body. Japhy Ryder enjoyed the opportunity to meet individually with the College President, and reflected: “It might not have happened if I was one of 50,000 students.” Raphael Urso disclosed: “It is a smaller community—you don't have to worry about being another number... you really exist. We have the close knit and you feel it.” Simon Urso praised how Wildwood offered the same student support services that one might find at a university, “but on a smaller, more intimate basis.” He also urged Wildwood and other growing colleges to maintain that sense of intimacy in the long term, towards a better understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses. This may

constitute the biggest challenge of all—maintaining a sense of closeness while capitalizing on opportunities for growth. As noted in the section discussing opportunities for future research, further study of “how to grow well” might be prudent. Wildwood and other “young” colleges would do well to learn from peer institutions that have experienced expansion at the rate that Wildwood hopes to achieve, and take heed of challenges and lessons learned.

Theme Three: Seek to Create Intentional and Ongoing Opportunities to Learn About Your Green Campus

Throughout conversations with research participants, it became evident that there was a desire to learn more about what the College facility was designed to do. Though many students and faculty had a cursory understanding of the more visible green features—such as the use of windows and air-circulating fans—there remained a clear there was a desire to learn more. Think back to Elly Palmer's deliberation on joining the College's Environmental Club, if only as a means to gain some knowledge of her surroundings. Barbara Lipp itched to explore Wildwood's mechanical rooms, “to see how they're all put together.” It seems logical for a spirit of exploration to pervade in such a singular space—for many, a trip to Wildwood may be their first time in a green building. There are unknowns to be reconciled, and mysteries to be solved. As Raphael Urso reported, “there are a lot of hidden things in this building that you would never know... I find new stuff every day.”

Current College initiatives designed to facilitate learning about the building seem largely passive in nature. Students like Japhy Ryder, Raphael Urso, Simon Urso, and

Chad King all described their own curiosity as a main driver for learning about the campus facilities, and have grown a certain level of comfort with what Chad called "butting in" and asking questions of teachers or staff. Sometimes, learning about the building is just a matter of being in the right place at the right time—in Japhy's words, "people come in and they talk about it a lot, so you just pick up stuff." Elly Palmer explained that she enjoyed the chance to use the College's interactive green kiosk, but conceded that she hasn't seen many people use them. Elly said that "most of the time, they look like they are turned off;" Amy Moriarty actually thought they might be "broken" at the time of our interview. Cody Pomeray reported that College administration conducts open sessions for staff and students, but observed that "attendance has not been terrific."

Perhaps Wildwood might consider building a more intentional and mandatory series of orientation programs designed to engage stakeholders with the specific qualities of the green campus. Faculty members who have been at Wildwood for several semesters, like Kenneth Wood, Barbara Lipp, Mary Dennison, and Marguerite Martin, all remembered participating in some orientation upon arrival to campus, but couldn't recall any ongoing effort for newer arrivals. Faculty hired since the College opened confirmed that there has been little opportunity to learn about the green facilities. Tom Saybrook said that "the teachers didn't get any formal orientation for it at all," but thought it would be a "great idea." Mary Dennison added that she thought that an orientation to the facilities "should be a part for anyone who is new to the college—it would be really

worthwhile," but admitted that "we don't do nearly enough orientation." Japhy Ryder predicted student interest in the idea: "I think people are looking for other ways to look about the green things on campus—something more formal."

Admittedly, making such orientation might be a hard sell for both students and faculty alike—Joanna Dawson balked at the idea of taking any time away from core teaching activities for a more aggressive orientation program. But consider what Wildwood is left to negotiate as a result: not one participant had a clear idea of why the green roof was locked, or what the future held for that very unique space on campus. Something as simple as a sign on the doors could help explain the roof's function to curious parties; something as basic as a weekly campus tour for any interested party could help to create a new league of experts, who might share that learning in conversation with peers.

Wildwood should take heart in one program—although not a formal initiative—that is already at work and promoting learning about campus. The College seems to enjoy a wealth of people who are willing to spend time with curious individuals, and share what they may know about the green features on campus. Recall Elly Palmer, who had the chance to tour parts of campus with a generous Campus Police Officer. Elly reported that "the officer was very informative—he knew a lot." Amy Moriarty credited her Music teacher as a source of much of her learning about campus. Marguerite Martin explained her delight at having a student open her eyes to some of the unique College features: "One of our design students had said that she noticed the curves of the building, and I had

never thought of it that way... I learned a lot from her, actually." Perhaps this is a program that could be expanded, coordinated, and supported by some application of College resources. Wildwood would do well to invest in a potent training program for this emerging class of docents—as Chad King advised, not all ambassadors are as expert as they may think: "Many teachers don't know about the full extent of the green features—like the different settings you can have on the lights. I'm pretty sure they're learning, too."

It seems natural for a College District that creates a green campus to treat that unique facility as a showpiece, used for making connections in the community. But there is a limit to the connections that can be made when only a few people have been given the training needed to engage people with the campus facilities. Wildwood runs the risk of suffering a version of "atlas syndrome," where a small group of experts carry the burden of understanding all that the College's facilities are designed to do. A more productive alternative would be an orientation and/or professional development program that helps build a robust understanding among the broadest group of stakeholders. Recall Japhy Ryder, who explained that "tours seem to be for special guests." Imagine the potential impact of an entire student body capable of giving tours to visitors, or an entire faculty and staff that could represent Wildwood at local or regional events. An increase in the number of people who are empowered with a thorough understanding of Wildwood would translate to an exponential increase in the number of community connections that could be made. The gains that might be realized in doing so could be tremendous. Recall advice from Amy Moriarty, who anticipated the difference an expanded orientation could

have on future enrollment: “I think it would have more of an impact. Maybe [the students] have a younger brother or sister, and they would tell them, 'hey, this school is cool, you should come here.' I can guarantee you if they think something is cool, they are going to want to do it, too.”

Theme Four: A Green Campus is an Opportunity for Innovation—Identify and Minimize Barriers that Embargo Creativity

Being the first green community college in the country is no small burden. Per the stories gathered in this research, it would seem that Wildwood students and faculty are navigating unique challenges on a routine basis. Some of these challenges amount to little more than a variation on the norms experienced at a school with traditional facilities—like discovering a greener dish soap to buy for the faculty lounge. Others are markedly more significant—like discovering that you will be chair of two departments, instead of a regular faculty member, on the day of your interview. The intersection of some of these challenges and the green campus features will vary—in fact, some of these challenges may have more to do with the relative youth of Wildwood as a campus, as opposed to any of the College's green qualities. Ultimately, an important lesson remains: teachers and learners at Wildwood have been given the chance to reinvent themselves, and rethink what it means to be a community college in the 21st century. Cast in the right light, these unique phenomena could become a gateway for thinking critically about standard operating procedures in the contemporary community college.

Wildwood faculty have had no shortage of opportunity to think creatively—at times, in direct response to obstacles encountered on campus. Cody Pomeray shared

stories of combining several sections of art classes, so that more students could take relevant coursework in the College's one art classroom. He offered that “we make do—artists always do... it's a lot of fun. It really does encourage all of us to think creatively, think openly. No idea is a bad idea.” Joanna Dawson had to quickly develop an understanding of how to be an effective department chair of two divisions, including a department where she had no previous teaching experience. Marguerite Martin said features like the showers and lockers provided for people who ride bicycles to campus “sets a tone, or gives someone a new way of thinking about what the perks of a job could be.” Marguerite added a long list of things that a community college could consider as part of a complete green campus, like a community farm and alternative energy production. Kenneth Wood summarized this creative spirit nicely: “We are going to establish the traditions that will grow out of this campus... We don't have to carry as much of the baggage or history as we go. We are making history.” Students shared fewer stories that showed a need to thinking creatively in response to Wildwood's unique characteristics, but did support the idea of responsible risk taking. Japhy Ryder shared advice for future community college leaders: “Don't be afraid to try anything new. If there's a new technique, what's the harm in trying? We're never going to know if it is going to enrich an experience unless we try.”

Though Wildwood will likely continue to encounter uncommon challenges for the foreseeable future, students and faculty seem to espouse philosophies well-suited for tackling those issues that arise. Especially among faculty, a spirit of lifelong learning has

taken hold. Regarding some of the lessons learned during a recent special event, Cody Pomeray remarked: “These were new waters. We aren't going to be too hard on ourselves. There are things we learned, and things we'll be working on.” Joanna Dawson explained that, though she felt strange acting as chair for a foreign department at first, open communication and ongoing discussions with teachers in that discipline have helped her succeed. Barbara Lipp noted her appreciation for the freedom to explore pedagogies at Wildwood, a stark contrast to the structure imposed on teachers at other colleges she's experienced. Kenneth Wood advised that these philosophies may be integral to success at colleges like Wildwood: “Being part of something new and making it up as you go... a person who is not comfortable doing that isn't going to be happy here... I find it liberating.”

Unfortunately, Wildwood faculty and students also offered stories about College rules or de facto policies that have compromised the effort to think critically and creatively. Here, the student voice is especially predominant. Chad King cited the difficulty that student groups have encountered in trying to get a nature trail created on the campus grounds. Sean Monahan recounted failed attempts to get Wildwood to plant a community tree, and to distribute bamboo plants around campus. Many participants—students and faculty alike—were disappointed that the College's green roof was perpetually locked (and locked without explanation). Amy Moriarty recounted her struggles to get the campus to sponsor an art fair, the goal of which would have been to create pots for new plants on campus. The event was not approved—per Amy, the

President thought that the pots would be “tacky,” and she was left wishing that the College would “put a little more passion in to it, instead of something that just looks nice.” Indeed, Wildwood does seem to put a premium on keeping the campus clean—reports from participants described the facilities somewhere between “spotless” and “cleaner than my house.” Perhaps that cleanliness itself is stifling—recall Cody Pomeray, who explained called the cleanliness “inhibiting” for his student artists who were engaging in a fundamentally “messy business.” This is one quality not likely to be abandoned—students like Elly Palmer agreed with published research on the positive impact of a clean facility. “It helps a lot to keep kids focused, because they're not all worried about this place being dirty.”

But the principle remains—Wildwood stakeholders, especially students, grate at some of the limitations placed on them by College leadership. Sean Monahan explained: “It's just stupid that there's red tape and liability when you're going through, cleaning litter, cleaning up campus. They're throwing up barriers... You'd think that it would be a little more relaxed at a college because they'd want you to express yourself, open up, and identify who you are.” We can probably assume that there is little chance that Wildwood or any other college would ever throw out all published policies and procedures, and turn the direction of activities on campus over to the whims of faculty and students. I anticipate that very few of these research participants would make such a suggestion, either. Perhaps there is a middle ground, or a way to re-envision how conversations about faculty and student ideas are conducted. Regular opportunities might be created for

faculty and students to share ideas with College leaders; in turn, those ideas could be cataloged and evaluated by a group of peers. That peer group might even engage the originator with constructive criticism, and collaboratively outline what resources might be needed to help the College realize maximum benefit from the suggestion. Ultimately, the College would build an inventory of strategies and solutions on a broad number of topics, and faculty and students would become part of a participatory process for deliberating about Wildwood's future. Alternatively, the College could inventory the skill sets of all staff on campus, and set aside some resources that could act as venture capital on campus. Again, using a system of peer evaluation, all Wildwood stakeholders would have a say in what ideas were most needed, what resources would be assigned to what ideas, and whose talents might be brought to bear to help these ideas become successful.

During our interviews, Amy Moriarty explained that some ideas that she has shared, such as a compost pile on campus, will “probably be something that has to be thought about, and re-thought about, and scratched off, and thought about again.” Wildwood risks alienating some of its biggest advocates and most creative thinkers if conversations about faculty and student ideas continue to be conducted in this manner. Kenneth Wood described the current group of faculty and students on campus as those who would be creating campus traditions and building the foundation of the Wildwood legacy. To ensure that this legacy is as meaningful as possible, Wildwood and other green colleges would do well to empower stakeholders to think creatively, and identify and remove unnecessary barriers to innovation.

Theme Five: Invest in a Robust Internal Communications Network

Other themes presented in this chapter detail the potential for augmenting communication at Wildwood, towards a shared vision for the College's future. When considering strategies for building such a network, Wildwood might do well to reflect on its plan for connecting with faculty and students regarding Phases II and III of campus construction. During interviews, Wildwood faculty and students had considerable—though not universal—praise for how administration gathered input regarding the forthcoming facilities projects on campus. Should the College invest in discovering the most and least effective traits of this communication initiative, Wildwood could take significant steps in building a more complete program for connecting with faculty and students.

Consider the significant number of faculty and students who had specific praise for the College President's habit of visiting classrooms and meeting with faculty individually to gather feedback. Japhy Ryder and Elly Palmer recounted times when the President had spent time with students to see “what else students would like” at Wildwood, which Elly thought was “really cool.” Cody Pomeray thought that the President's efforts to communicate about facilities plans were particularly laudable: “When we went through Phase I, she just had her entire life with meeting with people and asking them about what would make this the perfect spot for you.” He added that this has become a regular practice: “Our College President is in and out of our offices a couple of times a month, just seeing how you are doing.” Though Kenneth Wood said that planning

conversations were in the “preliminary stages,” he credited the President for making sure those discussions happened “on a number of levels.” Tom Saybrook was so encouraged by the dialogues that have happened that he “bet the next building will be different than [the current building,] but dramatically better.” Mary Dennison offered: “[The President] has gone out of her way to get that information from people. Everyone has had an opportunity to put their two cents in.”

But not all stakeholders have felt to directly involved in these conversations. Amy Moriarty had not been involved in any conversations about future buildings—perhaps a condition of her part-time status at Wildwood. Feedback from adjunct faculty member Barbara Lipp would seem to confirm this impression; she said: “I have no privilege to any of the planning processes—that's privileged information, and just not discussed.” Chad King revealed that whatever planning conversations do occur have yet to tap in to student organizations: “student groups and student government haven't been part of any conversations about future buildings. Just sporadic comments from some teachers.” The need to build a common understanding about the future of Wildwood cannot be overstated. Raphael Urso explained that he has had some interesting discussion with peers given his experience on this unique campus. When people discover that he is a Wildwood student, he said that “they get pretty lit up and then they start asking questions... I think some people think we build bonfires, sit around naked before class, but it's not like that.” Barbara Lipp explained that landowners in the Wildwood community “didn't know that this is going to be the biggest campus of the St. Louis

Community College." Her own impressions of what disciplines would be housed in the next buildings on campus were in direct contrast to her peers. It seems evident that a lack of information sharing has the potential to do some damage to College community relations and growth. Should the Wildwood community be left to its own devices, it may grow a false understanding of the College's interests, strengths, and future plans. Again, we see the tremendous need for Wildwood to leverage its faculty and student body—to enlist them as ambassadors for the green campus. To do otherwise risks the possibility of facilitating misimpressions and community disappointment, should a path be chosen that differentiates too dramatically from what had been surmised through rumor.

Faculty and staff repeatedly and specifically mentioned that the College President was facilitating the majority of the meetings with stakeholders regarding future campus developments. Perhaps this is another situation where the College has strayed too close to "atlas syndrome," where an interest in helping the President actively and visibly interacting with students and faculty has put too large a burden on one person. The College District might take this opportunity to inventory the administrative needs of the Wildwood campus, and explore what additional support might be required to enhance the College's communication efforts. Though few participants made specific comments regarding the administrative capacity at Wildwood, personal observations suggested that the College may be relatively lean in administrative staff. The College's Vice President for Academic Affairs splits time between Wildwood and another campus. Student and faculty observations about Deans or other administrators were virtually nonexistent.

Though Wildwood faculty correctly observed that teaching and learning is the core business of the community college, additional administrative support might advance organizational learning, and help facilitate the alignment of resources towards College innovation and growth.

Theme Six: The Road Map for Creating a Green Curriculum May Remain Unclear

It became evident during conversations with Wildwood faculty and students that there is an interest on campus in seeing green philosophies move beyond an idea realized in bricks and mortar alone, and become part of what happens in the classroom. Though that interest was reiterated several times, stories that demonstrated any success in doing so were much less common.

Some faculty and students recognized opportunities to build green ideas into existing coursework on campus. Cody Pomeray revealed that he has made changes in materials used in the Wildwood art classrooms per the College's green commitment. Mary Dennison reported that she has started to alter the real-life examples she uses to demonstrate scientific theories, and is trying to choose cases for their relation to ecology or the environment. But students were less prepared to cite instances where green ideas had been built in to the curriculum. Raphael Urso admitted that a green curriculum was still an “up and coming thing” at Wildwood. Other students, like Japhy Ryder and Chad King, struggled to think of ways that green ideas really could be woven in to their coursework. Japhy explained that “in the classes I'm in, you really can't... you can't really weave green in to jazz history.” Some faculty resisted the idea of a green curriculum, if

only for the time they would have to give up, normally dedicated to core subjects in the classes they teach. Kenneth Wood asked, rhetorically: “How do we integrate that in to elementary courses of the community college in a way that I'm adding and not subtracting?” Joanna Dawson flinched at the idea of giving up any of her core material: “We are so packed—if you take a 30-minute span out of a class, then you have to change the finals because we couldn't cover something.” Ultimately, per these concerns and others, Mary Dennison revealed that the College's efforts towards a green curriculum seem to be stuck in the early stages: “It's all fluffy stuff... I wish that we could have more resources in support of that.”

Other faculty and students expected Wildwood to be working on another level entirely, and be a leader in promoting disciplines of study more closely tied to environmental ideals. Sean Monahan wished that Wildwood would take better advantage of its grounds and “offer more naturalist classes.” Recall his admonition: “I thought there would be a lot more availability—school activities or functions around the environment. If the school goes so far out of its way to be green... then why doesn't it want to show off the ecosystem that it is protecting so much, or guide students in that direction?” Faculty member Marguerite Martin agreed, and hoped the College would explore programs like horticulture in future building phases.

Some participants simply wondered if the College could make better use of Wildwood's outdoor spaces for teaching and learning. Sean Monahan called the campus grounds “the most amazing and breathtaking thing about this school,” and urged the

College to take advantage of that fact. Cody Pomeray pined for proper outdoor facilities in which to teach art classes, citing the potential value for students across disciplines. Marguerite Martin reported that she has seen students use outdoor spaces for doing homework, but has only noticed a very few classes conducted outside.

Regardless of any relative measure of success, the idea and urgency behind integrating green ideas into the curriculum remains alive at Wildwood. When asked what advice they might like to share with future community college leaders considering green building projects, many participants—especially the faculty—emphasized that the green idea should be a core part of teaching and learning, and not just a blueprint for how a building is designed. Mary Dennison urged educators to go beyond "fluffy words" and "make [students] more aware of environmental issues before they leave campus." Cody Pomeray advised: "Spinning learning around responsibility I think is a must." Marguerite Martin agreed that a truly green college needs to "make the curriculum part of the whole thing," and retained hope for future integration of green ideas in the curriculum: "I think we are doing great here—but I think the more we've got, I realize how much more we have to do."

A green curriculum is a revolutionary idea—it asks that faculty re-imagine a considerable amount of their pedagogy and course materials in light of ideas that are emerging, evolving, and, at times, open to debate. It asks that faculty reinvent themselves—a tall order for an experienced staff whose past successes have been built on years of tweaking and refining the way a class is conducted. It asks that students stretch

their minds to embrace a new layer of concepts on top of what might be expected in traditional classrooms. Should Wildwood reaffirm a commitment to a green curriculum over the long term, it would do well to develop an understanding of successful change leadership strategies that might help faculty and students realize an easy transition from standard to green teaching styles. In doing so, the College would likely wish to build a unique solution, born of considerable organizational self-evaluation, and responsive to the needs of College stakeholders. Elements of a change solution could include intensive professional development with green educators from other organizations, and collaborative thinking with other green colleges and universities. Given that Wildwood will be in such a unique position when building its green community college curriculum, the investment in developing a green curriculum would not be without reward. Potential gains via published research or other publicly shared learning would help Wildwood build a reputation and the relationships needed to sustain momentum and support for years to come.

Interestingly enough, Wildwood faculty and students may be getting more of a green curriculum than they realize. Recall Marguerite Martin's story about how the College's windows and lighting have influenced the direction of conversation in her classes. She observed that, as a form of pro-social behavior, students had begun to bond over discussions of weather and the classroom lighting, instead of usual complaints about school work. In Marguerite's words, “people look for something in common to talk about, and it gives us a focus. Instead of having that homework assignment in common, they

also have the space, the view, and the light." Though this may not constitute explicit teaching and learning that would be related to a specific course objective, it may represent a gateway to expanding the role green ideas play in the Wildwood curriculum, should it choose to do so. The fact that students are being exposed to these ideas in a classroom setting may better prepare them to think in environmental terms when negotiating class projects in the future. Faculty who facilitate this type of conversation keep green ideas at the front of their mind, and may unconsciously begin to work green ideas into their classes. Though a more comprehensive and complete solution to building a green curriculum is likely more intentional and more visible, Wildwood might take some comfort from the green lessons that are being woven in to everyday conversation.

Theme Seven: Green, Clean, and Community are Not Mutually Exclusive

Over the course of data collection, I learned that Wildwood faculty and students were eager for the College to enhance their lives in more ways than one. Though most affirmed that they came to campus with a primary goal of teaching or learning, there was a distinct call for the College to play an active role in the social lives of its stakeholders. While some participants indicated that the College has made a good effort to create an engaging extracurricular culture, others concentrated on how much opportunity remains.

Adjunct faculty Barbara Lipp gave credit to the college's facilities for promoting a "very social" atmosphere on campus. She explained that students seem to be tutoring each other informally—even across strong cliques that she has observed at other schools. She surmised that "the building promotes that," per its open design and "friendly

atmosphere." Barbara added: "It's a psychological thing. It could be an attitudinal thing—because of those qualities, people are in a more positive frame of mind when they're on campus." Cody Pomeray described the success that the College enjoyed at a recent "green arts festival," where about 350 current faculty, staff, and community members interacted with artists and vendors whose work fit the environmental theme.

While efforts like these seem to be a good start, students have higher expectations for the role Wildwood could play in their lives. Japhy Ryder explained that Wildwood has played a smaller role in his life than the university he attended in the past—though he said he would be interested in spending more time on campus "if there was more of a sense of community." He added: "If it was a bigger campus, with a little more going on, I'd be OK spending more time here." Raphael Urso cited the lack of a social life on campus as the biggest thing that was missing at Wildwood. Though he expressed appreciation for the efforts of student activities staff, he urged the College to make the campus a center of activity around the clock: "Classes are generally Monday through Thursday—what about Thursday and Friday night? Campus life does a great job of hosting events but there is nowhere to go to just chill out and have fun... That would give people more of an incentive to come to school and learn about this school." Sean Monahan said that other community colleges in the St. Louis District have "a lot more going on" for students seeking social opportunities. At those other schools, "you get a lot more of the feeling that you're on a college campus, and you're part of a community college. It's those details, the little things. The little things that bring students together and

make them feel at home. I don't get that feeling here." Not all students had such expectations for Wildwood—Simon Urso was decidedly glad that Wildwood had less social activity on campus, which he said helped him focus on learning. He explained: "Not having all those extra things that pop up and get in the way, it's been a blessing, really."

Though on campus activities may be less than the student body desires, Wildwood does seem to be making an effort to build programs and activities that facilitate connections with the community. Cody Pomeray revealed that one of the goals of the green art festival was to help the College strengthen a relationship with local school districts. He noted: "We want the high schools to feel a connection [to Wildwood,] and be thinking about how we can partner with them even more." Barbara Lipp reported that residents in her own subdivision have formed a group that attends yoga classes at Wildwood, and had positive feedback for the College's work towards becoming a valued community resource. Marguerite Martin conceded that there are many things that the College has yet to do that might help organize a greater connection with the community, such as poetry readings or a community farm. She explained: "That would be bringing in the community... I think that would make us attractive and I think it would be something that the local Wildwood community would be proud of."

Notice the external focus among faculty above—and the disappointed students on campus that are left to cobble together what social life they can. Perhaps Wildwood is guilty of hoping that the student social network will take care of itself, and has instead

determined that putting time and energy into building external relationships is a more pressing need. Consider the sobering stories shared by several Wildwood students that revealed a sense of student apathy on campus. Amy Moriarty recalled her struggles in recruiting anyone to be a member of the College's Environmental Club. Chad King added, with some disappointment in his student colleagues: “[Student government] would like to keep the students informed, too, but at this point, they don't really listen. You can do flyers, and get information out, but they don't pay attention to it.” This apathy might be attributed—if only in part—to missed opportunities: the fact that Wildwood hasn't successfully engaged whole students in both educational and social opportunities may have effectively alienated the current student body. As Sean Monahan said, Wildwood just doesn't feel like home.

In all likelihood, any apathy displayed by Wildwood students has a number of causes, but the potential relationship between student apathy and a campus social life should not be ignored. In this case, Wildwood would do well to remember that it is significantly easier to retain students who are already coming to campus than it is to recruit new students. Though the focus on external partnerships is laudable, necessary, and will help realize long-term gains, the College may need to reconsider a more equitable distribution of resources, towards a broader and more engaging student activities program. In doing so, Wildwood will help ensure that those community connections—the relationships that form the pipeline that feeds the Wildwood student body—will actually translate to real and long-term student success. Indeed, an emphasis

on community may fuel new progress towards green ideals. Consider the energy savings that might be realized should Wildwood become a community hub—students would have access to social opportunities in their home towns, instead of having to commute to downtown St. Louis. Consider how many people might be exposed to green values should Wildwood create additional special events for the public. Pursuit of green ideas and investing in social activities are not exclusive propositions at Wildwood—ultimately, they would both be part of a holistic strategy towards regional sustainability and innovative education.

Theme Eight: Walking the Walk

During my interviews with Wildwood faculty, Kenneth Wood—otherwise a relative skeptic regarding any gains that might be realized in a green facility—conceded that the green features on campus did help College stakeholders align more resources with student success. He explained: “I don't want to be spending a lot of resources having to keep up an ancient campus that I could be using on students. Overall, in the long run, we would have been better to have a facility like [Wildwood] and then having the resources to benefit our students.” Kenneth and other Wildwood leaders would likely agree that such benefits would only be amplified as engagement with green ideas on campus grows. As more Wildwood stakeholders “walk the walk,” more cost savings could be realized, and those savings could be put to work for additional student support. For some participants—especially students—the importance of making environmentalism a long-term pursuit on campus went beyond a simple equation regarding cost savings.

Recall Sean Monahan, who explained: “Going to a green school, it doesn't matter at all unless you're somehow taught how it's green and why that's important. Otherwise, they might as well use coal.” Throughout these interviews, it became apparent that students have high expectations for Wildwood to “walk the walk,” and that people are putting green ideas to work in their lives on- and off-campus—though room for improvement remains.

Student expectations were manifested in a series of concerns expressed during data collection. Elly Palmer hoped that Wildwood would plant more greenery on the campus grounds and in planters inside the building in the future. At present, Elly remarked that “a lot of Wildwood campus is paved parking lots,” a disappointing contrast to other colleges in the St. Louis District. Amy Moriarty detailed the Environmental Club's simple but powerful plan to rouse a more concerted effort among their campus colleagues—a series of labels for recycling and waste receptacles, including a sticker that reads “landfill” attached to trash bins. Chad King offered what was perhaps the most charged call for Wildwood to be a champion of environmental causes—on campus, but also in the larger College community. After reviewing his photos of dumpsters around the community, with no or little evidence of recycling programs in the area, Chad lamented: “Why bother? Why bother coming to school and recycling when I drive right past this every day? It would make more sense if it were a community effort.” Sean Monahan explained the Environmental Club's goal of connecting with local businesses to advance green ideas: “We can get businesses to do it—the YMCA, because they do not recycle

anything. We're just going to square them away." Mary Dennison added that some faculty are growing similarly high expectations. She wondered: "How can so many students walk in and out of our doors and not be changed for the rest of their lives on environmental issues?"

The philosophies that might drive future achievement towards a green agenda do seem to be in place at Wildwood. Japhy Ryder advised that the College also expects its students and staff to contribute: "Here, they say, 'we are green, and you need to help us keep it up.' There are extra duties, privileges—a different view of the whole thing, and I think it's very positive." Cody Pomeray shared that the philosophy is becoming ingrained among faculty and staff, as well: "Everyone is very proud that [Wildwood] is a green campus. They talk about recycling all the time... It is on their minds—they not only take it very seriously, but they want to build and spread throughout the whole community here." Many participants photographed or described the penetration of the recycling effort on campus—per Mary Dennison, recycling bins seem to be "around every corner."

The maxim "actions speak louder than words" may be particularly appropriate on a green community college campus. Several participants shared stories as evidence that Wildwood is seeking to operationalize green ideas on a daily basis. Amy Moriarty appreciated the College Bookstore's efforts to include greener products on its shelves, including reusable shopping bags and a series of environmentally-themed books. Elly Palmer and her friends have banded together to car pool to campus, an effort designed to maintain their relationship and save on gas. Cody Pomeray pursued a greener solution to

participating in this research, and opted to use his own digital camera for reflexive photography instead of the disposable camera provided. He also described his efforts to make his classroom activities more environmentally friendly, using non-toxic materials and solvents whenever possible. Joanna Dawson and Mary Dennison explained how seemingly small decisions like the purchase of a dishwasher for the faculty lounge, or the use of green cleaning products, have helped make a difference. Barbara Lipp said that the recycling effort on campus is compelling: “The paper, the plastic, the aluminum is all recycled. We don't throw any of that stuff away.” Japhy Ryder had praise for the College's efforts to date—he noted: “I think Wildwood is staying true—I think they're doing a great job. And I like that a lot.”

But the majority of participants seemed to agree that Wildwood stakeholders could be better practitioners of the green ideas that the College espouses. Amy Moriarty observed teachers “hog the recycling bins and hide them in the back [of the classroom,] and they don't even use them... They could encourage students to just make a pile and recycle it when they leave, but they don't.” Chad King thought that the College's online courses could be a gateway to a greener course schedule, “but the process still takes a lot of paper. It seems like it's doing about half of what it should be.” Chad also advocated for a more concerted effort to bring public transportation campus. Though he hypothesized that regional funding challenges were partially to blame, he was left to wonder: “What's the point of a green campus with no bus stop?” Many participant responses hinted at significant opportunities to pursue greener solutions to traditional community college

challenges, such as course scheduling and student activities. Most students have to commute to other District campuses for courses not offered at Wildwood, and commute to downtown St. Louis for social opportunities, both of which use gasoline and create pollutants, thus undermining the contribution the campus is making to the regional environment.

Faculty member Tom Saybrook also observed behavior that compromised Wildwood's ostensible green mission, including teachers and students throwing away recyclable materials. When asked if he thought his colleagues were “walking the walk,” Tom responded: “Probably half and half—they certainly could do more things.” Sean Monahan remained unconvinced that Wildwood was designed in response to a concern for the environment—instead, he guessed that the Wildwood campus was an effort to create “publicity” for the St. Louis Community College district. We might revisit Chad King's use of the term “human error” regarding Wildwood's failures in seeking to be as green as possible. He added: “There has to be an incentive for everyone else to work together. It has to be cooperative, communal.”

Indeed, helping individual faculty and students identify a personally relevant motivation for contributing to the College's green efforts may be one of the largest challenges that Wildwood faces as it moves forward as a green community college. But the College should remain optimistic—during these interviews, a great number of participants shared stories that demonstrated how time at Wildwood had encouraged them to become greener in their lives away from campus. Raphael Urso claimed that he has

inadvertently picked up recycling habits at Wildwood, and said that “it helps train your brain” to be part of a green school. Simon Urso agreed, and said that the suggestion to recycle “is probably the biggest influence” he has experienced on campus. Elly Palmer has gone so far as to plant a garden around her house, and enjoys using her all-natural crops in meals for her family. Many faculty reported a newfound sensitivity to environmental issues, and described a new sense of “awareness” that has emerged in their lives away from campus. Mary Dennison offered specific examples, like using reusable cups at coffee shops, or looking through family member's garbage for recyclables. Perhaps the College could connect with individuals like these, whose lives have been changed per their experience on campus. Working together, Wildwood might identify the interactions, experiences, or discoveries that have compelled these people to change their habits, and enhance the work of those actors on campus. To use Chad King's words, “human behavior” will likely mean that pursuit of green ideas is never perfect or complete at Wildwood. However, an enhanced, informed, and communal effort could only help the College “walk the walk.”

An Answer to Research Question One

What expectations did students and teachers have before experiencing the green building? How has their actual experience compared to these expectations?

Few participants reported having many expectations for the Wildwood campus when they first arrived at the College. Many people did not know about the College's green features, save a few faculty who had been part of the planning and construction

process. Some students and faculty seemed prepared to encounter a “new” or “modern” campus, and have been pleasantly reassured by the open architecture, commitment to natural light, and the College's efforts to keep facilities clean.

However, student and faculty expectations for the green campus seem to have grown exponentially as these stakeholders have grown more familiar with the building. Teachers and learners were quick to identify Wildwood's great potential, and do not hesitate to hold the College to a high standard. This may be indicative of expectations that these individuals did not realize they harbored, or, indeed, a simple outcome of growing accustomed to the campus. The result is clear: student and faculty ideas regarding what Wildwood is and what Wildwood could be seem to have advanced rapidly since the College has opened. At present, it seems less important to learn whether these suppositions were honed before arrival, or in the short time that most of these people have been part of the College. Instead, College leaders would do well to identify and focus on the significant gaps between participant expectations and the reality of life at Wildwood.

Faculty stories about the shortage of office spaces and College classrooms betrayed an expectation for privacy and flexibility that is yet unmet by the current College configuration. Faculty and staff alike had little praise for the current library collection, and urged Wildwood to consider things like a cafeteria and gymnasium in future building phases. Though these suggestions might be better classified as “desires,” rather than “expectations”, it would not be difficult to anticipate these ideas moving to the

latter category, if not a new category called “necessities.” College leaders would likely agree that each of these suggestions has a potential to help build a stronger campus community and present attractive opportunities for potential faculty and students. While some participants conceded that certain space decisions and allocations have likely been made per some cost-benefit formula, the application of this type of logic does not always translate to a compelling excuse.

Since becoming part of the campus community, many participants have adopted a pioneering spirit, relevant to the sense of “inventing” what it means to be a teacher or learner on the green campus. As pioneers, these faculty and students are curious about their surroundings, and seem to yearn for additional opportunities to learn about the College' green features. Again, though this may not have been an expectation that these stakeholders felt before arriving, we see that the green campus makes short work of arousing curiosity and creative thinking. To date, opportunities for such learning have been sporadic, and often passive. Additionally, there are few, if any, formal mechanisms by which campus stakeholders can collaborate with peers to think critically about ideas.

One of the clearer expectations communicated by participants—especially by students—was the desire for enhanced extracurricular programming on campus. Though many participants confirmed the sense of community that seems to be growing on campus, more people attributed that quality to the relatively small size of the College, as opposed to any intentional effort for social activities. The student voice was especially strong again among calls for the College to “walk the walk,” and commit to

environmental excellence in the long term. Though many participants complimented the college on the accessibility of the recycling program, the green products in the bookstore, and other long-term green commitments, participants indicated that the College could be doing more. Perhaps this is a situation where a small number of individuals are requiring an inordinate amount of most attention—even if this is the case, that small number has access to a large audience, and could do significant damage to College morale if their ideas are not heard.

College leadership itself seems to be contributing to the creation of expectations—the formal and informal conversations with students and faculty, hosted by administration and designed to collect input regarding future building phases, validates the ideas contributed by teachers and learners. Given that top administrators like the College President are often the people who facilitate these dialogues, students and faculty may feel an increased hope that their own ideas may become part of future campus plans. Inevitably, not all ideas will be able to be used for Phase II, or even Phase III at Wildwood—some ideas might be mutually exclusive, out of scope, or simply not cost effective. However, if there is no follow-up to these initial conversations, a significant group of stakeholders—disappointed at having their ideas left on the cutting room floor—will receive no explanation as to why the College has made the choices it has. The ill-will that may result could pose a serious detriment to campus culture. There will be no recommendations here for Wildwood administration to stop these conversations—instead, Wildwood might seek to leverage the communication channels that are already

taking shape to advance a more positive outcome. Using regularly scheduled, inclusive, and deliberative discussions, the College could create a shared vision—not only for what Wildwood's facilities become, but how the College gets to that evolving result. Consider: the College might collaborate with stakeholders to create a rubric that, at least in broad strokes, demonstrates how decisions about future building phases are made. The College could create quality circles to "crowdsource" the deliberative process, led by faculty or students—thus empowering more stakeholders, and increasing the reach and involvement of the College community. Perhaps the College could reserve a specific square footage or dollar amount as an award for a stakeholder innovation competition, guaranteeing that at least one faculty- or student-driven concept becomes part of the next building phase. The ownership and excitement that could result would be a tremendous boon for the College—and a unique opportunity that few other schools presently enjoy.

Wildwood should celebrate those wins that have been realized via application of green facilities improvements. Faculty and students reported a near-unanimous improvement in health per the College's air circulation systems, and lauded the beneficial effects of natural light, open architecture, and generous windows on teaching and learning. Wildwood has achieved a good deal of support for the technology it has been able to provide for faculty and students, especially in the classrooms. The College has changed the way many participants live their lives away from campus as well, having helped its faculty and students adopt habits regarding recycling, use of reusable materials, and even starting gardens around their homes. Whether participants anticipated these

changes or not, their experience seems to have been positively enhanced by the green campus. With this solid foundation in place, the College might be more aggressive and intentional in responding to faculty and student expectations in the future.

An Answer to Research Question Two

What is the experience of being a student or teacher in a green building like? What unique opportunities or challenges have emerged?

The stories that these participants have shared indicate that being a teacher or student in a green building is, in some ways, remarkably different than life at other Colleges. Participants reported that Wildwood's green features—especially the air circulation systems and use of natural light—have promoted a noticeable effect on health, outlook, and ability to focus. Many faculty and students described a sense of pride and ownership in campus initiatives, even if that ownership is sometimes manifested in concerns or complaints about how the College realizes its mission of teaching and learning on the green campus. Significant challenges remain, though each might be re-imagined as an opportunity for growth, engagement, or innovation, given the right attention and application of resources.

Since joining the College, Wildwood faculty have experienced a challenge in finding the privacy and/or quiet needed to perform certain tasks. Though many faculty explained that the working space assigned to teachers is an improvement on conditions at other campuses, they continue to seek a more suitable arrangement when discussing future building phases. Faculty added that the College's green features can sometimes

present a barrier to solving facilities issues—walls cannot be installed without serious consideration of the effect on air circulation and access to natural light. Students thought that classrooms could be enhanced with some decoration or other installations that would encourage creative thinking. For all these challenges regarding space, stakeholders laud what the relatively small campus has done for a person's ability to make connections with others. Participants explained that College administration has actively pursued opportunities to collect feedback from faculty and students in their own environments—often meeting in classrooms or faculty offices. Few participants reported that the challenges presented by the configuration of space on campus were insurmountable—though some people explained that suggestions for things like improved faculty offices have been resisted by College administration. Wildwood leaders might do well to reflect on progress realized through those intimate conversations, and remember to that patience and collaborative deliberation will be valuable elements of a problem-solving strategy moving forward.

Students and faculty are impressed by the College's commitment to engage the community with the building—the ongoing campus tours for special guests have confirmed that Wildwood is something of a showpiece for the St. Louis District. Unfortunately, that investment in building partnerships seems to be happening at the expense of faculty and student learning—many participants noted a lack of orientation activities for new people on campus. Teachers and learners have had to take it upon themselves to ask questions of others who may or may not have had some formal

introduction to Wildwood. When no experts are readily available to offer explanations, some participants were inclined to manufacture their own answers to questions about the College's green features. Other faculty and students used this as an opportunity to build connections with an informal and emerging group of green ambassadors on campus, like the Bookstore staff and Campus Police Officers. In and of itself, this behavior betrays a unique opportunity yet unrealized on campus—turning lay individuals into experts an advocates for the College, both on campus and in the community. Faculty and students seem ready for the College to move away from the understanding that administration or special designees are the only people qualified to represent the green building, and become a core piece of the solution themselves.

Students and faculty alike shared stories about life on a green campus outside the classroom. Many participants seemed hungry for additional extracurricular opportunities, and urged the College to capitalize on the opportunity to become a hub of community activity in West St. Louis County. Students seemed inspired by the College's green commitment, and demonstrated a strong interest in pushing that green agenda forward via nature trails, new course offerings in environmental disciplines, and more robust programs for helping stakeholders become greener citizens, such as increased public transportation to campus. Many of these opportunities have yet to become realities on campus—which has faculty and students wondering if the College will be green in building only, or if the College is ready to commit to a long-term green investment. In some cases, it would seem that Wildwood leadership can only do so much towards these

ends—the collaboration of external parties will be crucial to initiatives such as new transportation infrastructure and approval of new curriculum. Wildwood administration will likely encounter significant challenges in pursuit of ideas that require external support, and would do well to invest in a transparency that keeps stakeholders updated regarding deliberation and progress towards these initiatives. Buried beneath these challenges remain tremendous opportunities—students interested in education or urban planning might take on service learning projects and join the College teams that might form in pursuit of these initiatives. Faculty with particular skills might be charged with developing events or initiatives that contribute to social activities on campus—individuals might use Cody Pomerania's green arts festival as a model.

Though participants described many unique conditions of life at a green college, teachers and learners at Wildwood experience many of the same challenges that they would at traditional community college campuses. Barbara Lipp reminded community college leaders that students at a green campus deal with the same life challenges that many others deal with—the need to work while completing studies, commitments to family, and developmental learning needs. Many faculty reported a sensitivity to troubling budget projections and their implications for performing the College's core business of teaching and learning. For all its innovation in facilities design, Wildwood will remain, fundamentally, a community college. That truth translates to a considerable workload for College leadership: community colleges will always need to be diligent in pursuit of student engagement, organizational learning, and data-informed decision

making. Leaders of green colleges will need to balance pursuit of any environmental initiatives with workforce development, contributing to a P-20 pipeline, and connecting with community partners to advance strategic initiatives. Green colleges like Wildwood will be working with over a thousand peer colleges in the United States seeking to spread access to excellent higher education, promoting lifelong learning, and bolster student success. Perhaps what makes Wildwood so remarkable is not its green commitment, but the example it will set for balancing a green agenda with the always evolving work of doing community college education. Indeed, Wildwood may be helping realize a new future for community college education—where green ideas are not understood as a complement to traditional issues, but as a core issue in and of itself. Undoubtedly, as the College grows, there will be additional lessons to be learned from Wildwood leaders in the short- and long-term future.

An Answer to Research Question Three

How does the green building represent a change from past experience as a teacher and/or learner? How have these changes been supported, and what could be done to better support future changes?

Wildwood is fundamentally different than other colleges, given the application of green ideas throughout its facilities. By and large, faculty and students reported that these features constitute a vast improvement compared to other college campuses. And while the College may have anticipated some impact on the lives of teachers and learners at Wildwood, it might not have predicted what seems to have emerged as the biggest change for faculty and students—the choices thrust upon teachers and learners as the pioneers of green community college education. Wildwood represents a new type of environment for community college teaching and learning. Choices made here will act as precedent for others traveling this path—and yet Wildwood is forced to operate in a void of promising practice, the lone green college among its peers. To realize any kind of success, stakeholders would do well to recognize that support for the decisions that the College makes may be as important or more important than the decisions themselves.

The College's green features are still the most obvious departure from the norm that students and faculty will encounter at Wildwood. Participants credited the College's green features for contributing to outcomes like improved health, positive attitudes, and heightened focus on studies—though conceded that most faculty and students had much to learn about the inner workings of campus. There may be a temptation to undervalue

the potential effects of teaching people about how the campus works. Some pundits might suggest that the College should let the green features do their job, and ask the campus community to focus on teaching and learning. Other more reticent critics might suggest that people come to a community college for either a credential (in the case of students) or a paycheck (in the case of faculty), and might put the opportunity to learn about building features considerably lower on a list of priorities. But consider what might be gained through an intentional orientation program that engages faculty and students with the green building—these teachers and learners would enjoy the unique opportunity to participate in dual learning, where they not only absorb ideas related to a chosen academic discipline, but discover what a green building can do for its users. In this manner, students gain a skill that might be brought to future places of employment, and/or enhance their understanding of how to positively affect their family budget through application of green ideas. Faculty would be better equipped to serve as ambassadors for Wildwood, and alleviate some of the burden on what seems like a very small group of administrators on campus. Wildwood stakeholders face a choice—to let these green features dwell in the background of College life, or bring them to the forefront of the learning that happens on campus. To date, Wildwood has invested in strategies that are largely passive in nature—a green kiosk, various posters and publications, and the off chance that a faculty member or student might overhear something from a passing tour. A number of more active strategies remain untapped, including suggestions from participants in this research, such as short videos shown in

classrooms, or a College Green Ambassador program. With the help of Wildwood faculty and students, College leaders would undoubtedly discover more options for creating a compelling orientation to the green campus.

Wildwood is also now faced with decisions regarding how far beyond the building itself to take these green ideas. Participants explained their interest in capitalizing on the unique grounds that Wildwood has access to, and posited the great potential in creating trails that helped stakeholders engage with the natural environment, or investing in outdoor spaces that might be better equipped for formal teaching and learning opportunities. Wildwood faculty seem to recognize that there is a call on campus to build green ideas into the curriculum, though few have had concrete ideas on how to do so. Here, too, we see how Wildwood has changed the experience of community college teaching and learning. The very nature of the building encourages heightened expectations—faculty and students anticipate that the College will work to advance environmentalism as an overarching philosophy, rather than a piecemeal initiative. Wildwood has a tremendous opportunity for innovation regarding a greener curriculum—something that few colleges have explored before. But that exploration may not come naturally for Wildwood teachers, through no fault of their own—it would be a surprise if many of these faculty have had the opportunity to take coursework in developing a green curriculum. No faculty reported having had the opportunity to engage in any extensive professional development in support of such an effort. The choices to be made here deal largely with allocation of resources—both time and money. Wildwood could decide to

invest in a more robust professional development program, soliciting the expertise of outside parties who may have more extensive experience in building green in to the classroom. Alternatively, the College could create a new sort of instructional design support staff team on campus—a group of individuals who would be dedicated to helping faculty envision pathways to greener courses. At the very least, Wildwood might consider making an investment of time—releasing faculty for a portion of their teaching assignments to build peer mentoring relationships and faculty support groups, designed to help people think creatively about a green curriculum. There are several avenues that Wildwood might pursue as it seeks to advance a green curriculum—many of which, admittedly, would require significant buy-in from the College District and its stakeholders. All parties involved, however, should remember that little exploration and innovation is done without significant support.

The fact that Wildwood is a new and growing campus seems a change for many participants. Nearly all faculty and students had some comment on the College's plans for Phase II and Phase III at Wildwood. Some of those comments included suggestions for what might be included in future buildings, and described the College administration's efforts to gather feedback, where other comments explained that not all campus stakeholders have been able to join the conversation. Undoubtedly, Wildwood's condition as an “incomplete” campus puts pressure on all types of stakeholders—born of questions entertained from community members regarding future College plans, of the struggles to organize a course schedule within the limitations of facilities capabilities, faculty

strengths and student needs, of how the College will grow in light of District budget projections, and any number of other sources. The relatively small number of full-time faculty at Wildwood puts tremendous pressure on those teachers to perform important tasks outside of the classroom, such as participation in shared governance and contributing to curriculum alignment with regional K-12 schools. The limited choices that students enjoy regarding disciplines of study and available courses mean that Wildwood may encounter greater-than-average challenges in retaining students on its own campus. Participants reported that College administration has done significant groundwork in setting up the communication network that might help alleviate some of that pressure, though additional outlets remain. As Wildwood seeks to support faculty and student transitions to the growing campus, it might look to expand and re-imagine those communication networks. Rather that envisioning these conversations as a simple means for gathering feedback, the College might organize something more akin to double-loop learning, where ideas are not just collected, but discussed, challenged, and improved in a continuous cycle. Should Wildwood be able to engage a broad group of stakeholders in this type of conversation, more faculty and students would be enabled with an understanding of the whole context in which the College operates—individuals would enjoy a more thorough grasp of the whole picture. This would be the type of campus community that could turn cynicism into productive energy, and get the many creative thinkers discovered during this research involved the process of solving problems related to being a new and growing College.

Many faculty reported feeling the opportunity to “reinvent” themselves at Wildwood. Faculty who haven't had access to contemporary technology now find themselves re-engineering decades-old curriculum to leverage unique tools. Faculty leaders recognize the weight of being the people who mold traditions and setting high expectations for future stakeholders. Teachers confirmed that these new opportunities have come with added workloads—one participant noted that her role on campus grew from faculty to chair of two departments in very short order. Wildwood is a great example of the fact that there is a tremendous pressure inherent in being part of something so new and different. Students and faculty at Wildwood are pioneers. Few people who have been called such have realized much success without substantial support. The ideas discussed here are but a few of the options that Wildwood has for becoming more active in facilitating healthy change in the future—the best solutions will be discovered in ongoing collaboration with the College community.

Implications for Practice

It seems almost counterintuitive to try and reduce what was learned during my time at Wildwood to a concise series of lessons to share with other leaders. As Mary Dennison explained, the College has to be seen to be believed. Perhaps that advice in and of itself should be listed first among implications for practice: the green community college can never be understood until it is experienced. In the context of this research, such a statement has many meanings—the first being that community college leaders would do well to continue this quest to discover how green campuses intersect with

teaching and learning, especially from the perspectives of faculty and students. The second meaning is drawn from the qualitative nature of this research. The stories gathered here are unique perspectives born of the many filters, philosophies, and past experiences that influence how Wildwood faculty and students view the world. In the future, perspectives gathered on other campuses will reveal meaningful differences and similarities. As we continue on this journey of discovery, I submit the following suggestions to the leaders of contemporary green community colleges.

Seek Flexible Space Solutions

Wildwood has had seen both successes and struggles because of the College's facilities layout. Open office arrangements contribute to a lack of privacy for faculty, while other open spaces are lauded as facilitators of social behavior among students. Study space is at a premium on campus, and unanticipated facilities needs like dark rooms for film classes send leaders scrambling in pursuit of ad hoc solutions. Participants advised that colleges seeking to go green should think well ahead when planning a campus layout—and that, wherever possible, flexibility should be a top priority. Green colleges have the opportunity to be a great innovator regarding the application of flexibility in educational facilities. Indeed, given the influence of additional building costs on the overall campus size and/or allocation of space, the need to pursue adaptable space solutions seems acute. Perhaps these green conditions will be the testing ground for new space philosophies that move colleges away from assigned spaces and ownership of buildings and rooms, and the “turf wars” that can result. Stakeholders may wish to study

an application of “hoteling” concepts sometimes applied in private industry, where space is assigned on a daily basis in response to immediate needs.

Build Capacity for Outreach

Participant responses have shown that the application of green features on a college campus can positively enhance the lives of its faculty and students—and yet there remains so much to gain from those green features after the building is complete. Teachers and learners are hungry to learn more about how the green building works to influence the on-campus experience. Absent any formal learning opportunities, some choose to ask colleagues about things they have noticed on campus—though not all will be so forward. Still others invent their own explanations for the function of these features. These results reflect a missed opportunity—instead, green colleges might capitalize on the curiosity of its faculty and students, grow a band of experts via intentional orientation programming, and enlist their help in advancing the wins that might be realized in a green building. Per reports from faculty and students, Wildwood is already trying to use the green facility as leverage in building community relationships—that initiative could only grow stronger if more people are empowered with the understanding needed to act as ambassadors for the campus.

Develop Support Mechanisms for Green Pioneers

Wildwood is doing something that is a significant departure from traditional community college education. In the coming decade, those community colleges that decide to make green buildings part of their own facilities plans will be doing much the

same. In these environments, faculty and students deal with difficult choices that will have tremendous impact on the outcomes realized in these green environments. Faculty will negotiate what it means to advance a green curriculum. Stakeholders will create responses to unique challenges created per the manner in which a green facility drives planning and resource allocation. Students and faculty alike will wrestle with the high expectations placed on them to operationalize a college's green agenda in day-to-day life. In each of these scenarios—and in innumerable others to be encountered on a green campus—stakeholders are blazing new trails, and answering questions that have rarely, if ever, answered before. Absent support, this may be a staggering situation for faculty and students. Colleges, districts and systems should keep a watchful eye for these unique situations, and build a catalog of potential support solutions that can be applied when the need arises. Professional development from outside experts, on-campus staff support, or peer mentorship networks are but a few of the options that higher educators might consider. Additionally, colleges would do well to remember that the choices that will be encountered on a green campus are likely particular to the characteristics of that individual facility. A framework borrowed from another green college may serve as helpful guide, but there is no shortcut to identifying the needs of your own campus.

Enable Creative Thinking

Here we see an important complement to the above. In this research, faculty and students and Wildwood have been called pioneers, explorers, adventurers—these descriptions are drawn from a demonstrated willingness to be first among peers, and to

share what is learned about life on a green campus with others. Indeed, the idea of reinventing what it means to be a teacher or learner on a green community college campus seems to appeal to the people who call Wildwood home. Some faculty and students observed that people who have come to campus lacking that pioneering spirit have not lasted long, and have quickly found other places to teach or learn. Those who remain have had no shortage of ideas for how Wildwood could evolve—suggestions included everything from a community farm to new programs of study in horticulture and natural resource conservation. Given the right outlook, green colleges would have much to gain from this kind of creative thinking. Faculty and student innovation could translate to significant college entrepreneurship and new kinds of community relationships. In this research, participants reported that Wildwood can be overly fond of enforcing rules that act as barriers to innovation. This behavior has the unfortunate potential to quiet or completely silence these creative voices on campus. Community colleges thrive when they build strong mechanisms for enabling and engaging the creative thinking of its faculty and students. This idea might be even more compelling at green colleges, where this genius might be applied to the uncommon challenges presented by unique facilities. Working in collaboration with stakeholders, green colleges who invest in a means to enhance the college's creative capacity will be better positioned to respond to future tests.

Respect the Core Needs of Stakeholders

Though Wildwood has and will continue to break new ground as a green leader in community college education, participants advised higher educators to remember that

there are core needs that must be satisfied, much the same as any other community college campus. There was a resounding call for the College to move closer to the center of students' lives, become a facilitator for the critical socialization that happens during the college experience, and act as a community hub for progressive and engaging activities. Both faculty and students praised the efforts of College Administration to collect feedback from stakeholders regarding future building plans, though responses also betrayed an interest in seeing those communication channels grow into a more robust system for deliberative dialog on campus. Green colleges should not forget that, despite any successes realized via innovative facilities, there will always be a need to think critically about core community college concerns—access, developmental education, workforce development, and a host of other current and emerging issues. During this research, it became evident that Wildwood faculty and students possess great talents that could be applied during critical discussions on campus—an opportunity that should not be missed. Green colleges might do well do enlist the help of faculty and student representatives to facilitate such discussions on campus—participation and honesty may increase among groups of peers, and the leadership experience gained by moderators would be a compelling ancillary benefit.

Remember the Power of Word-of-Mouth Marketing

I had the honor of visiting the Wildwood campus—to see the building, and to experience a small part of what the College's students and faculty experience on a daily basis. From that visit, I took a collection of memories, including mental pictures of

rooms, halls, and other building features that I could recall when listening to a participant's interview. I could place a participant's photograph in a broader context, having seen in person what fell just beyond the viewfinder, and could call upon those stories shared by participants to complement a growing understanding. But not all consumers of the Wildwood idea will enjoy such exposure to life on campus—others will be restricted to whatever glossy viewbooks or news coverage that the College can manufacture. Given the added costs of building green, and the additional support needed to realize the thorough and ongoing benefits from that type facility, green colleges would do well to enlist the help of word-of-mouth advertising to complement any initiative designed to engage the community with the college's goals and philosophies. Once again, we see the need for green colleges to invest in robust communications systems that engage stakeholders with an understanding of strategic and operational plans. Thus equipped, these green colleges would enjoy an elite group of ambassadors capable of representing the college's goals and ideas.

Anticipate Administrative Needs in Collaboration with District or System Support

Few participants had specific comment regarding the administrative capacity at Wildwood. However, many of the recommendations listed in this section, drawn directly from participant feedback, would seem to require administrative support. As such, Wildwood and other green colleges might anticipate a need for significant numbers of permanent administrative staff on campus. These are the people who would work to facilitate progress towards College goals, and align resources with initiatives designed to

promote student success, while advancing the effect of the green features on campus. The need for additional administrative support at Wildwood seems especially dire, given the relative dearth of full-time faculty positions that have been created for the campus. This compromises the ability of that faculty to contribute to College needs beyond the classroom. The need is even further when we consider that Wildwood seems to be the District's showpiece—hosting special events and tours for special guests. When green colleges are intended to be a showpiece, districts and systems would do well to offer these campuses the most aggressive support possible—so they might be the most compelling showpiece possible. The instinct to leverage a green campus as a marketing tool makes sense—these are unique facilities with attractive potential outcomes. However, the long-term success of a green campus might be compromised given a lack of administrative support. In turn, this creates the potential for a very public media disaster, should community members discover that their investment has not produced intended results.

Consider Building Green

This research was never intended to deliver a mandate regarding the need for community colleges to invest in or avoid green building projects. The faculty and students at Wildwood have delivered that recommendation instead. The green features at Wildwood have contributed to a tremendous feeling of pride and ownership among faculty and students—even when that ownership is realized as concerns about unmet expectations. The stories that these participants have shared indicate that the green

building has improved attitudes, health, and focus on studies. These gains are not without their challenges, many of which have been described in this chapter. It will be up to individual colleges to weigh the potential costs and benefits of building green for their own community. One thing is for certain—as Wildwood continues its journey as a green college, it will contribute to a growing body of promising practice that other colleges should leverage when making decisions about future facilities projects. The expertise that is growing among campus stakeholders is one of the most unique and important resources that Wildwood can claim moving forward.

Limitations

At the outset of this research, potential limitations were hypothesized in light of the proposed research methodology—discussion of those limitations was shared in Chapter Three. Over the course of data collection, some of those limitations were confirmed, and others seemed to have less of an impact than anticipated. The use of case study methodology and snowball sampling technique for this study inherently limits the generalizability of results. In this case, Wildwood's unique designation as a green community college necessitated a case study focus; it is hoped that that focus will inform future studies that compare and contrast emerging green campuses across the country. Snowball sampling may have contributed to a relative lack of adjunct faculty among research participants, a condition that may be addressed with further study. Before beginning data collection, I anticipated that introducing technology in the form of digital cameras may present a challenge for some participants. In fact, no faculty or students

reported any difficulty with the use of visual research methods. To limit social desirability effects, I arranged meetings in neutral locations, and avoided asking any leading questions or taking any positions on the issues presented by participants. The candor and contrasting praise and concerns that were shared within interviews suggests that participants were not compelled to manufacture answers, but relied on their own experiences to inform discussion. Other limitations discovered over the course of data collection were born of the scope of the research—new questions arose in conversation with participants that this study was not designed to answer. Many of these questions formed the basis for the suggestions for future research that are discussed in the following section.

Suggestions for Future Research

This research has produced illuminating stories from faculty and students who have experienced life on a green community college campus. It is hoped that the lessons they have learned and the advice they have shared will serve as a guide to community college leaders who are considering or beginning their own green building projects. However, much remains to be learned about life on a green community college campus. The number of colleges who are building green is growing, and the urgency to study the effects of those buildings is on the rise. The following are but a few of the potential topics that future research might explore, towards a more comprehensive idea of how green buildings intersect with teaching and learning in the community college.

At Wildwood, it became evident that the experience of faculty and students was not only affected by the College's green features, but also by the fact that the campus was relatively new—the facilities were less than two years old at the time of data collection. At times, faculty and students described unique experiences, challenges, and opportunities that were directly attributable to Wildwood's green features. At other times, the building's youth seemed a more likely culprit, or it seemed as though the faculty or student experience was influenced by a conflation of both green and new. Thus we see a great opportunity to gather more data from recently built community colleges, and learn more about how faculty and students perceive their experiences on those campuses. The body of work produced through this type of research would enable further comparison of how green and/or new community colleges affect the lives of stakeholders, and build a clearer delineation of what community college leaders should expect in a green building.

Cases Studies in "Growing Well"

As noted in the earlier discussion about the unique decisions to be made regarding space on a green campus, there exists a need to learn more about the successes and challenges that community colleges have experienced as they grow. In July of 2009, United States President Barack Obama announced the American Graduation Initiative, a program that would help community colleges realize $12 billion in new funding, with a stated goal of adding 5 million new graduates by the year 2020 (Obama, 2009). This aggressive goal means that change is in order for American community colleges, whose classrooms are often already full. Leaders would do well to remember what students from

Wildwood have advised during this research—as colleges grow, they need to maintain strong student engagement, lest they run the risk of alienating students who have come to expect a certain level of access to support services. Future research may wish to profile colleges who have experienced extraordinary growth, towards a collection of promising practices and lessons learned that could help educators respond to coming changes.

A Longitudinal Look at Retention, Persistence, and Completion in Green Buildings

Many students reported that the green features at Wildwood have made a positive contribution to their ability to focus on school work while on campus. Faculty and students alike explained that the College's green features encouraged positive attitudes and social behavior. These seem to fit recommendations from student engagement literature, where scholars often emphasize the importance of helping students build connections to people at their place of learning. Participant responses indicate that the burgeoning sense of Wildwood as part of student identity could also influence engagement, towards much-pursued goals of retention, persistence, and completion. Researchers might consider a mixed-methods approach to combine a phenomenological understanding of student perceptions with enrollment and graduation data.

Collecting and Contrasting the Administrative Perspective

This research has discussed the importance of focusing on the perspectives of faculty and students. By doing so, the stories collected from teachers and learners maintain a certain purity, free from any rationalization given by college administration. College leaders who encounter these stories are given an unfiltered look at what their

faculty and students perceive to be true regarding their experience on and around campus. It is not the intention of this research to suggest that the administrative perspective is without merit. Instead, consider that the administrative perspective warrants its own unique study—a study that focuses on administration, and omits input from faculty or students. The results produced in this type of study could be compared to this research, which may help scholars identify major disconnects between groups on campus. Results of such comparisons could help community college leaders identify strategies for building a stronger shared vision and improving collaboration on campus.

The Faculty and Student Experience on Hybrid Campuses

Not all community colleges are starting from scratch like Wildwood. Many community colleges are adding green buildings to established campuses of a variety of ages and sizes. This type of "hybrid" campus may exert its own unique influences on the experience of faculty and students—different than the influences encountered on a wholly green or traditional college campus. A number of variables might serve as the focus for this type of research—including a comparison and contrast of faculty and students who use the green building frequently, and those that don't, per differences in disciplines of study, the stated functions of the building, or other factors.

Illuminating Faculty and Student Perspectives at Green Community Colleges—A 10 Year Follow-Up

As Wildwood continues on its journey of facilitating teaching and learning, a number of things are likely to change on campus. If the College is able to advance even

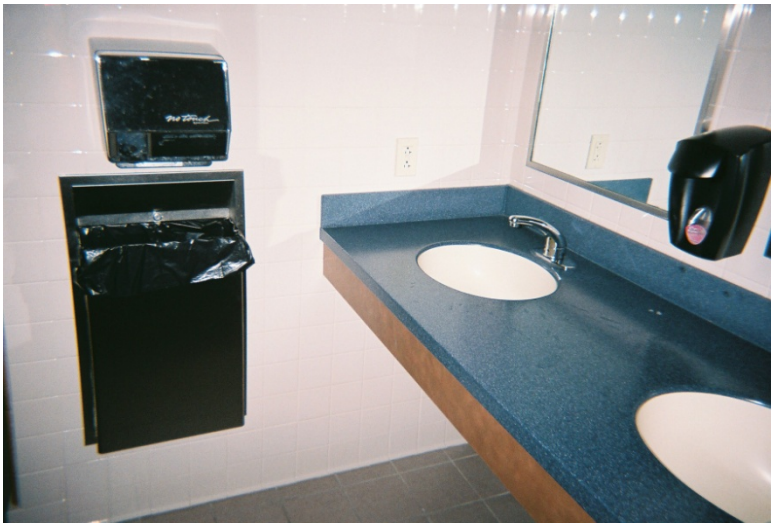
half the ideas that faculty and student participants suggested in the next ten years, Wildwood will be a very different place. The green roof may be open, new buildings may have been added, there may be a farm on campus, groundbreaking new courses of study in ecology or alternative energy may have been developed—there is enough creativity on campus to satisfy a dozen community colleges. With those changes will come new experiences, new opportunities, and new challenges. In time, it may be prudent to revisit Wildwood, and explore what it means to be a teacher or learner on a green community college campus with a new group of faculty and students. Green buildings don't seem to be going away, and the effect they have on community college education is increasingly evident. I look forward to being part of this research for many years to come.

APPENDIX

Beginning on the next page, a selection of images created by participants during reflexive photography is shared. Each participant's pseudonym will be followed by three pictures that were particularly unique or reflective of the collection of photographs that they produced.

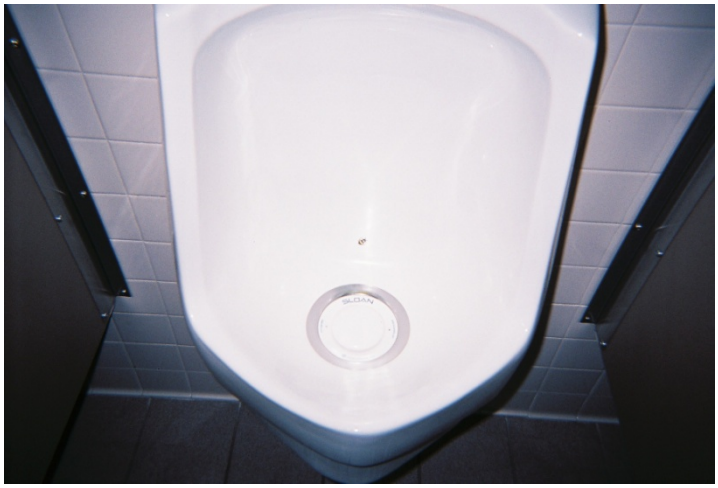
Japhy Ryder

Amy Moriarty

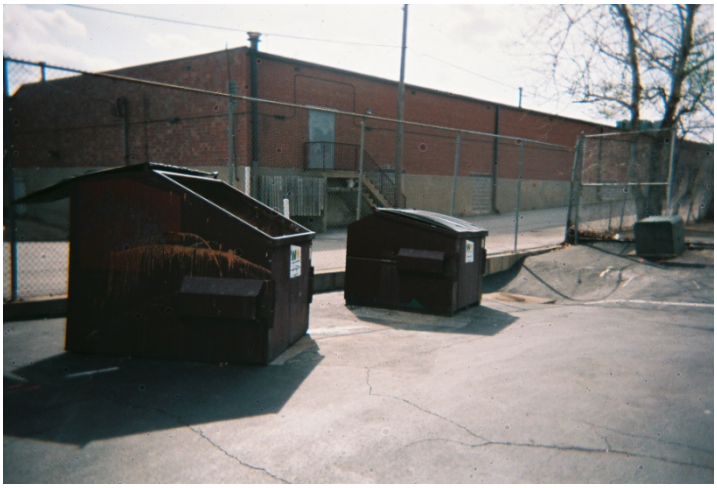


Raphael Urso

Simon Urso

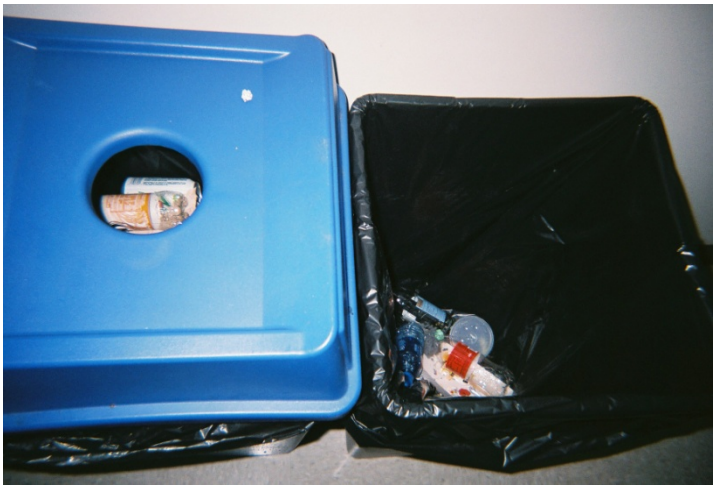


Chad King

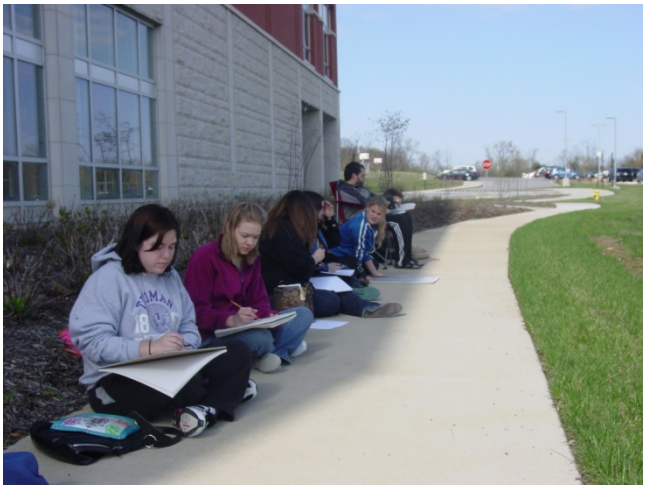


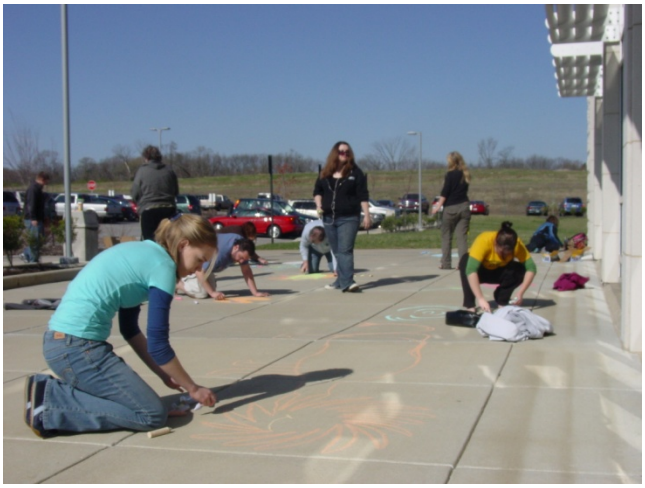
Elly Palmer

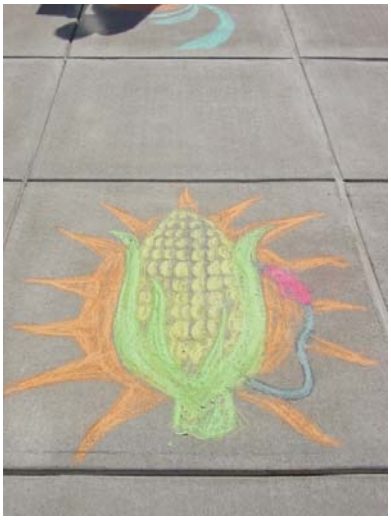
Sean Monahan



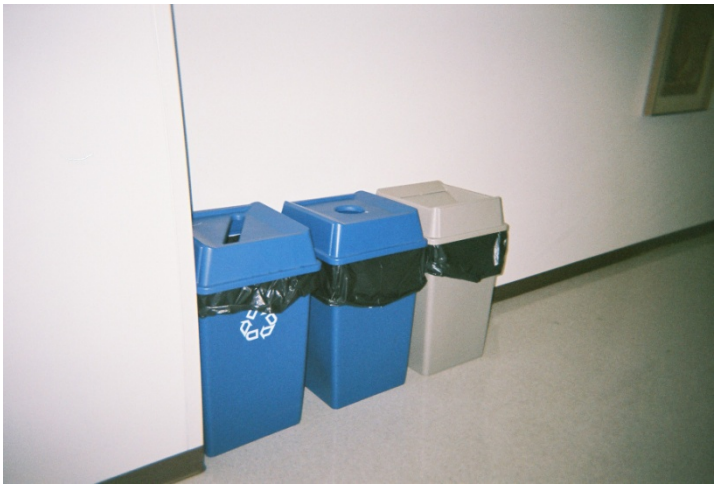
Cody Pomeray

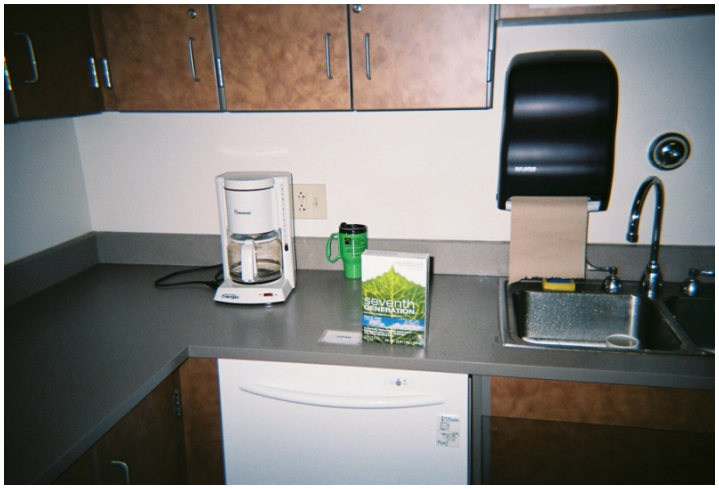






Joanna Dawson





Kenneth Wood

Barbara Lipp

Tom Saybrook

Mary Dennison

Marguerite Martin

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